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MISCELLANEOUS
OBSERVATIONS
ON
IMPORTANT
THEOLOGICAL SUBJECTS,
ORIGINAL AND COLLECTED.

By the late REVEREND
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P R E F A C E.

PRESIDENT EDWARDS has left many manuscript volumes of observations, on almost all subjects in divinity, which either occurred to him from his own meditation, or from the books he read. He wrote these volumes, not with any design they should ever be published in their present form, but that he might retain thoughts which appeared to him worth preserving, both for his own improvement, and for the instruction and edification of others. The judicious author of the life of this great and good man, gave his opinion, Part IV. Sect. I. that, from these manuscripts, a number of volumes might be published, which, though more imperfect, than if the Author had prepared them for public view, would afford much new light and entertainment to the church of Christ. The high and well-merited reputation, not only of the books prepared for the press by the President, but of the sermons published since his death, have occasioned many solicitations to his son, Dr Edwards of Newhaven, to collect and print such part of those manuscripts as might be generally useful. In compliance with these requests, he has not grudged the labour of transcribing this volume of miscellanies, which, if it prove acceptable, will be followed by more, as the Doctor's health and leisure permit.

Many important and original thoughts occur, Part I. on the Evidences of Revealed Religion: *e. g.* Moral and religious knowledge only from revelation, § 19. Christ and his apostles taught not that the last judgement was near, § 44. Jesus's prophecies, a proof that he was the Christ, and that he was God, § 49, 96. Propriety of the general judgement, § 59. Reasonableness of some particular doctrines, § 62. Miracles of Jesus not opposed by counterfeit miracles, § 65. Miracles of Jesus superior to those under the Old Testament,

Testament, § 68. Much instruction concisely conveyed by scripture metaphors, § 81. Excellencies of scripture history, § 82. Propriety of gradual improvement in understanding the scriptures, § 83. Propriety of room being left for discovering truth by scripture consequences, § 84. The necessity of divine revelation vindicated against Tindal and others, § 87,—94. p. 257,—331. Jesus proved the Christ, from his destroying heathen idolatry according to scripture prophecy, § 97. Propagation of Mahometanism not parallel to that of Christianity, § 99. State of the Jewish nation, an evidence of revealed religion, § 100. Observations on Christ's miracles, § 105,—107.

Equally striking and judicious are many of the reflexions on the mysteries of revelation, Part II.; and on the Trinity and Divinity of Christ, Part III.

Many, therefore, who relish solid reasoning on religious subjects, though not adorned with the beauties of eloquence, will deem themselves much indebted to Dr Edwards for gathering these fragments, that nothing might be lost.

Some, who have purchased and read Archbishop Tillotson's sermons, Stapferi Theologia Polemica, Bennet's Inspiration of the Scriptures, Grotius de Veritate Religionis Christianæ, Sir Isaac Newton's Chronology, Religion of Jesus Delineated, Deism Revealed, and Jones on the Canon, may possibly wish that the large quotations from them had been omitted. But Dr Edwards was advised to publish them, as they may prove an antidote to the deistical notions spreading in some parts of America, where these books are in few hands. These passages may lead some to read these books, who otherwise would not have known them. The President's originality of genius, and attachment to Calvinist principles, did not hinder his seeking and finding instruction in their writings, whose system of theology was very opposite to his. It were well, if in this he was imitated by all who possess distinguished talents, and who boast of liberality of sentiment.

28 SE60 JOHN ERSKINE.

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1793.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS
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PART I.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE FACTS AND EVIDENCES OF
CHRISTIANITY, AND THE OBJECTIONS OF INFIDELS.

1. **I** suppose it will be acknowledged by the Deists, that the Christian religion is the most rational and pure religion, that is or ever was established in any society of men whatsoever; and that they will except only themselves, as serving God in a manner more according to his will than the Christian manner. But can any believe that God has so wholly thrown away mankind, that he has not so ordered it, that there ever yet has been any service or obedience paid to him in society, but what is odious to him, and very dissonant to his will? that there never yet has been a society of men, that have rightly paid respect to their Creator, the Supreme Being? yea, so that there have been, if any, not above twenty or thirty from the beginning of the world, that ever gave the true sort of service to God? For I believe it will not be pretended, that there were ever more than that number of Deists in the world, that have lived pure and moral lives, according to the dictates of reason.

It is easily proveable, that the highest end and happiness of man, is to view God's excellency, to love
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him, and receive expressions of his love; and that, therefore, his greatest business is, to meditate and use means to understand God's glory, and express suitably his love to God. This love, including all those other affections which depend upon it, and are necessarily connected with it, we express in worship. The highest end of society among men therefore, must be, to assist and join with each other in this employment. But how comes it to pass, that this end of society was never yet obtained among Deists? Where was ever any social worship statedly performed by Deists? And if there should be a society of Deists, that were disposed socially to express their love to God, and honour of him; which way would they go about to do it? They have nothing from God to direct them. Doubtless there would be innumerable jangles, and perpetual dissensions about it, unless they were disposed to fall in with the Christian model. We may be convinced, therefore, that revelation is necessary to right social worship.

2. There never was any religion, but that which we profess, and those formed from it, that pretended to inform us of the nature of God; told us that there was but one God; gave an account of God's works, how the world came into being, and how God governs it: discovered God's great designs; what is his will, and how he should be served: and declared the reward of obedience and punishment of disobedience; the nature of man's happiness, and the end for which he was made: that gave us good moral rules; told us what will become of the world hereafter; explained how we came to be sinful and miserable, and how we may escape sin and misery, and be redeemed: gave an account of the great revolutions of the world, and the successions of God's works in the universe; and where his true worshippers have been all along, and what has befallen them; or informed us how the world came to apostatize from the true worship of God. Christianity is the only religion that ever pretended

tended that there should a time come, when it should be the religion of the world in general.

3. The Jewish religion as at present professed, most certainly differs from what reason evidently declares to be the essence of religion. It does not state aright the highest end and happiness of man, his chief business and greatest misery, and the true worship of God. Undoubtedly the Messiah was to come to advance the best interest and true happiness of mankind, which certainly consist in what the gospel declares our Jesus advanced, and not in what the Jews expect the Messiah will do. The Messiah undoubtedly was to be our king, in our highest and most important concerns; he was to be our deliverer from our greatest evils and enemies; which all must confess to be such concerns, as the gospel says Christ was exercised in. It is also certain, if this is the chief business of the Messiah, he cannot effect it by an external, earthly government. The saving of us from sin, the making of us holy and spiritually happy, and bringing of us into the favour of God, is not to be advanced by such means. I will say further, it is evident it could be done no otherwise than by satisfying God and interceding with him; by giving precepts, promises, and threatenings; by immediately changing the heart; by restoring and conquering the invisible spirits, that are hurtful to our spirits.

Not only may revelation be argued from the necessity we have of it, by reason of the darkness we have contracted by the fall; but, seeing that man is created for that end for which he certainly was created, it would be a strange thing that there should be no mutual communication between him and his God.

4. I think it certain, that seeing the miracles of Christ were done, for three years and a half, so publicly all over Judea; and seeing there was such violent opposition in Judea, so soon after, against the Christians; if the matters of fact had been false,

they would have been denied by the Jews generally; and if this had been the case, we should have known it. The Jews afterwards would much more have denied them; which it is evident they did not. If they had, they would have been denied by the Heathens that wrote against the Christians. But they were not denied. It is impossible that the whole world should have turned Christian, in three hundred years after the facts were so publicly done, if they had been generally false. If the Jews had denied the matters of fact at first, they would undoubtedly have denied them at this day, seeing they are so tenacious of the traditions of their fathers. Christ's resurrection was openly published within a few days after his death, on the day of Pentecost. It is undoubted, that the number of the Christians increased every where exceedingly from that time; so that a considerable alteration was speedily made by it in the face of the world. Whether the matters of fact were written or no, it is undoubted, that they were universally talked of. The conversion of the Roman empire to the Christian religion, was the most remarkable thing that ever happened among the nations of the world; and it would be unaccountable that it should have happened upon the story of a few obscure men, without inquiring into the matters related. And it would be a very strange thing, if the Old Testament was true, that there should in that be no prophecies of such a change; especially when almost all the great and general changes of the nations thereabouts, though far less remarkable, were foretold; and it is no wonder that there should be prophecies of so great a change among the heathen.

5. I am convinced of the necessity of a revelation, by considering how negligent, dull, and careless about a future happiness, I should be, if I was left to discover that happiness by unassisted reason: especially if there were no revelation at all, about what is pleasing to God; how he accepts our services; after what manner

manner he loves his servants; how he will pardon sin, &c.

6. It is certain that Jesus Christ had none of the advantages of education, to get learning and knowledge; and it is also certain, that, every where in his speeches, he shewed an uncommon insight into things, a great knowledge of the true nature of virtue and morality, and what was most acceptable to God, vastly beyond common men, vastly beyond the rest of the nation, take Scribes and Pharisees and all. And how did he come by it? how did he get it at Nazareth? Those who have not an education in these days, may get much by books, which are so common: but books of learning were not to be had then. Yea, it is evident that he knew vastly more than any of the philosophers and wise men in the whole world, by those rational descriptions which he gave of God and his attributes; of his government and providence; and of man's nature, business, end and happiness; of what is pleasing to God; of the immortality of the soul, and a future state. How knew he, so exactly, truths perhaps demonstrable by reason, but never found out before? Hence was it, that his peculiar doctrines were perfectly consistent with reason, such as the resurrection, the day of judgment, God's absolute decrees and predestination, original sin, reconciliation by his death, salvation by faith, of mere grace, regeneration, &c.

7. That Christ was really dead, appears, inasmuch as it is not to be imagined, that, in such a death as is caused merely by pain, all the exercise of life and vital action should be gone, before life itself, as it may be in convulsions and some stupifying diseases; especially, considering how leisurely his death was effected. And if he was not dead when they came to him, he was doubtless almost dead: and the piercing of his side would undoubtedly have quite destroyed his life. And it is very unreasonable to imagine, that he

feigned himself dead ; for, what reason had he to think that he should have success, if he did ? or to expect they would take him down before he was quite dead ? Or, if he had had such a design, such an intolerable condition would have banished all intrigues out of his mind. Or, if he had them still in his thoughts, it was not possible that he should have the power of himself so well, when he was so weakened by pain, and the loss of blood, and every nerve in his body was so racked with torment, and he almost dead, life struggling with death ; I say, it was impossible that he should act his part so accurately, as not to be discovered or suspected. Besides, if he was not dead when they took him down from the cross, he was very near it ; and, no doubt but his grievous wounds, and the loss of most of his blood, and fasting so long, would have extinguished his life before the third day. And if then he only rose out of a swoon, how came he perfectly sound at once ? Where did he get his blood again so suddenly, as to be as strong and hearty as ever ? Surely one would have thought, that his feet were so lame, that he could not walk on them. Doubtless, his hands and feet were much torn by bearing his weight so long on iron spikes driven through them. And if he rose from the dead in no supernatural sense, whither did he go when he rose ? What became of him ? We have no account of his dying again : nor was he yet to be found after a few weeks.

8. If Christianity was not true, it would never afford so much matter for rational, understanding, and penetrating minds, to be exercised upon. If it were false, such minds would find it empty, and it would be a force upon the intellect to be set upon meditating upon *that* which has no other order, foundation, and mutual dependence to be discovered in its parts, than what is accidental. A strong and piercing mind would feel itself exceedingly bound and hindered. But in fact, there is the like liberty in the study of Christianity, and as much improvement of the mind,

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as in the study of natural philosophy, or any study whatsoever; yea, a great deal more. And whatever may be said about Mahometan divinity, I cannot be convinced but that a mind that has the faculty and habit of clear and distinct reasoning, would find nothing but chains, fetters, and confusion, if it should pretend to fix its reason upon it.

9. Seeing the beauty of the corporeal world consists chiefly in representing spiritual beauties, and the beauties of minds are infinitely the greatest; we therefore undoubtedly may conclude, that God, when he created the world, shewed his own perfection and beauties far the most charmingly and clearly, in the spiritual part of the world. But seeing spiritual beauty consists principally in virtue and holiness; and seeing there is so little of this beauty to be seen now in that part of the spiritual world that is here on earth; hence we may fairly conclude, that there has been a great fall and defection in this part of the spiritual world, from its primitive beauty and charms.

Corollary. Seeing it is so, and this is so agreeable to the account that the Christian religion gives of the matter; and seeing it is evident, by many arguments, that God intends not to give over man as lost, but has a merciful intention of restoring him to his primitive beauty; and seeing we are told of this, and of the manner of it, in the Christian religion alone; and seeing the account is so rational; it is a great confirmation of the truth of the Christian religion.

It is also evident to me, that the lower, corporeal world, has not its primitive beauty, but that only the ruins are to be seen; and seeing this is so exactly agreeable to the account which the Christian religion gives of the matter, and the account of the marring of the beauty of the world by the fall and flood, being so rational; this also confirms the Christian religion.

10. It is a convincing argument for the truth of the Christian religion, and that it stands upon a most
sure

sure basis, that none have ever yet been able to prove it false, though there have been many men of all sorts, many fine wits and men of great learning, that have spent themselves, and ransacked the world for arguments against it, and this for many ages.

11. It is exceedingly improbable, that it should ever enter into the head of any mortal, to go to invent such a strange system of visions, as that of the Revelation of St John, of which he himself could give no manner of account of the meaning or design, and did not pretend to it. What design could he have in it? But, if he had a design, the frame and make of the visions is not a whit like a random invention, without any view or design as to interpretation.

12. It does not seem to me at all likely, that any person among the Jews, so long ago, should have so perfect a knowledge of nature, and the secret springs of human affections, as to be able to feign any thing so perfectly and exquisitely agreeable to nature, as the incidents in Joseph's history, and the other histories of the Bible; particularly the history of Genesis.

13. Such kind of miracles as healing the sick, the blind, the deaf, dumb, lame, &c.; and creating bread and flesh, and turning water into wine, are greater miracles, than those that are so much more pompous, as causing universal darkness, dividing the sea, the shaking and burning of mount Sinai, &c. It is a greater work to give exactly that disposition of parts to air and earth, that shall cause bread or fish, than to cause such great motions that are merely the exercise of strength. And the healing of the sick and distracted, do more especially manifest divine power; for this cause, that we have reason to conclude that mankind especially are subject to God's providence, and that their health and the exercise of their reason, are alone in his hands, and that it is not in the power of

of any evil spirit to give them and take them at his pleasure, however great power he may be supposed to have over the inanimate creatures.

When a person appears, that has evidently the whole course of nature at all times subject to his command, so that he can alter it how and when he pleases, we have the greatest reason to think that that person has divine authority, and that the Author and Upholder of nature favours him, and gives approbation to what he pretends thereby. For we know, that the course of nature is God's established course of acting upon creatures; and we cannot think that he would give power to any evil spirit to alter it, when he pleases, for evil purposes. But Christ manifestly had the course of nature so subject to his will and command.

14. It would not have been proper for Christ constantly to dwell among men after his resurrection. Men would be exceedingly apt to fall into idolatry; and, because they saw the man Christ Jesus with their eyes, would be apt to worship him, as directing their worship to the human nature. Therefore we are not to see the man Christ Jesus till we are perfected, and are not liable to temptation on such occasions. For this reason, probably, it was not convenient for Christ to appear in great majesty and glory when on earth, but the contrary: for this reason, Christ endeavoured to hide his transfiguration, and many other miracles, till after he was risen; and for this reason, he did not converse constantly with his disciples after his resurrection, as before. All these things were done the most wisely and fitly that can be imagined.

15. If human reason, by any thing that has happened since the creation, be really very much corrupted; and if God is still propitious, and is willing that we should obtain the good for which we were created, and does not throw us off, but reserves us for that end for which he made us; it cannot be imagined that
God

God would leave us to our reason as the only rule to guide us in that knowledge and business, which is the highest end of life : For it is not to be depended upon; and we exceedingly need something that may be depended upon, in that on which our everlasting welfare depends. If God be still inclined to shew mercy to us, and does not cast us off, he doubtless will be very merciful, and will consider our great need of a better rule. It does not seem to me reasonable to suppose, that if God be merciful after we have forfeited his favour, he will manifest his mercy only in some mitigations of that misery into which we have plunged ourselves, leaving us inevitably to endure the rest : but that he will quite restore us, in case of our acceptance of his offered favour.

16. It seems much the most rational to suppose, that the universal law by which mankind are to be governed, should be a written law. For if that rule, by which God intends the world shall be regulated, and kept in decent and happy order, be not expressed in words that can be resorted to, and be supposed to be expressed no other way than by nature; man's prejudices will render it, in innumerable circumstances, a most uncertain thing. For though " it must be
 " granted, that men who are willing to transgress,
 " may abuse written as well as unwritten laws, and
 " expound them so as may best serve their turn upon
 " occasion; yet it must be allowed, that, in the nature of the thing, revelation is a better guard than
 " a bare scheme of principles without it. For men
 " must take more pains to conquer the sense of a
 " standing, written law, which is ready to confront
 " them upon all occasions. They must more industriously tamper with their passions, and blind their
 " understandings, before they can bring themselves
 " to believe what they have a mind to believe, in
 " contradiction to the words of an express and formal declaration of God Almighty's will, than
 " there can be any pretence or occasion for, when
 " they have no more than their own thoughts and
 " ideas

“ ideas to manage. These are flexible things, and
 “ a man may much more easily turn and wind them
 “ as he pleases, than he can evade a plain and po-
 “ sitive law, which determines the kinds and mea-
 “ sures of his duty, and threatens disobedience in
 “ such terms as require long practice and experience
 “ to make handsome salvos and distinctions to get
 “ over *.” And upon this account also, that it is fit
 in every case, when the law is made known, that also
 the sanctions, the rewards and punishments, should
 be known at the same time. But nature could never
 have determined these with any certainty.

17. Raising the dead to life, is given in the Old Testament, as a certain proof of the authority and mission of a prophet; and that what he says is the word of God, and the truth. 1 Kings xvii. 24. “ And the woman said to Elijah, By this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth.” So that if the Old Testament is the word of God, Jesus was a true prophet.

18. The being of God is evident by the scriptures, and the scriptures themselves are an evidence of their own divine authority, after the same manner as the existence of a human thinking being is evident by the motions, behaviour and speech of a body of a human form and contexture, or that a body is animated by a rational mind. For we know this no otherwise, than by the consistency, harmony and concurrence of the train of actions and sounds, and their agreement to all that we can suppose to be in a rational mind. These are a clear evidence of an understanding and design, which are the original of these actions. So there is that wondrous universal harmony, and consent, and concurrence in the run and drift, such an universal appearance of a wonderful and glorious design, such stamps every where of exalted and divine wisdom,

* Ditton on the Resurrection.

wisdom, majesty and holiness, in matter, manner, contexture and aim; that the evidence is the same, that the scriptures are the word and work of a divine mind, to one that is thoroughly acquainted with them, as that the words and actions of an understanding man are from a rational mind, to one that has of a long time been his familiar acquaintance. An infant, when it first comes into the world, and sees persons act, and hears their voice, before it is so much acquainted with their actions and voice, before it has so much comprehension of them as to see something of their consistence, harmony and concurrence, makes no distinction between their bodies, and other things; their motions and sounds, and the motions and sounds of inanimate things: But as its comprehension increases, the understanding and design begin to appear. So it is with men that are as little acquainted with the scriptures, as infants with the actions of human bodies. They cannot see any evidence of a divine mind, as the original of it; because they have not comprehension enough to apprehend the harmony, wisdom, &c.

19. Were it not for divine revelation, I am persuaded, that there is no one doctrine of that which we call natural religion, which, notwithstanding all philosophy and learning, would not be for ever involved in darkness, doubts, endless disputes, and dreadful confusion. Many things, now they are revealed, seem very plain, and as, if we could easily have arrived at a certainty concerning them, if we never had had a revelation of them. It is one thing, to see that a truth is exceedingly agreeable to reason, after we have been told it, and have had it explained to us, and have been told the reasons of it; and another, to find it out, and clearly and certainly to explain it by mere reason. It is one thing, to prove a thing after we are shewn how; and another, to find it out, and prove it of ourselves.

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If there never had been any revelation, I believe the world would have been full of endless disputes about the very being of a God; whether the world was from eternity or not; and whether the form and order of the world did not result from the mere nature of matter. Ten thousand different schemes there would have been about it. And if it were allowed that there was a first cause of all things, there would have been endless disputes, and abundance of uncertainty, to determine what sort of a thing that first cause was. Some, it may be, would have thought that it was properly an intelligent mind and a voluntary agent. Others might say, that it was some principle of things, of which we could have no kind of ideas. Some would have called it a voluntary agent: some a principle exerting itself by a natural necessity. There might have been many schemes contrived about this, and some would like one best, and some another; and amongst those that held, that the original of all things was superior intelligence and will, there probably would have been everlasting doubts and disputes, whether there was one only, or more. Some perhaps would have said, there was but one; some that there were two; the one the principle of good, the other the principle of evil: others, that there was a society of them, or a world of them. And among those that held that there was but one mind, there would be abundance of uncertainty what sort of being he was; whether he was good or evil; whether he was just or unjust; holy or wicked; gracious or cruel; or whether he was partly good, and partly evil; and how far he concerned himself with the world, since he had made it; and how far things were owing to his providence, or whether at all; how far he concerned himself with mankind; what was pleasing to him in them, and what was displeasing; or whether he cared any thing about it, whether he delighted in justice and order or not; and whether he would reward the one, and punish the other; and how, and when, and where, and to

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what degree. There would have been abundance of doubt and dispute concerning what this mind expected from mankind, and how we should behave towards him; or whether he expected we should anywise concern ourselves with him: whether we ever ought to apply ourselves to him any way; whether we ought to speak to him, as expecting that he would take any notice of us: how we should shew our respect to him; whether we ought to praise and commend him in our addresses to him; whether we ought to ask that of him which we need; whether or no he would forgive any, after they had offended him; and when they had reason to think they were forgiven, and what they should do that they might be forgiven; and whether it is ever worth the while for them that are so often offending, to try for it; whether there were not some sins so great, that God never would upon any terms forgive them, and how great they must be in order to that. Men would be exceedingly at a loss to know when they were in favour with him, and upon what terms they could be in his favour. They would be in a dreadful uncertainty about a future state; whether there be any, and, if there be, whether it is a state of rewards and punishments; and if it is, what kind of state it is, and how men are to be rewarded and punished, to what degree, and how long; whether man's soul be eternal or not; and if it be, whether it is to remain in another world in a fixed state, or change often.

It would be so, also, with respect to abundance of moral duties which respect ourselves and one another: every man would plead for the lawfulness of this or that practice, just as suited his fancy, and agreed with his interest and appetites; and there would be room for a great deal of uncertainty and difference of opinion among those that were most speculative and impartial. There would be uncertainty, in a multitude of instances, what was just, and what unjust. It would be very uncertain how far self-interest should govern men, and how far love

to our neighbour; how far revenge would be right, and whether or no a man might hate his neighbour, and for what causes: what degree of passion and high-spiritedness and ambition was justifiable and laudable: what sensual enjoyments were lawful, and what not: how far we ought to honour, respect, and submit to our parents, and other superiors: how far it would be lawful to dissemble and deceive. It seems to me, there would be infinite confusion in these things; and that there would hardly be any such thing as conscience in the world.

The world has had a great deal of experience of the necessity of a revelation; we may see it in all parts of mankind, in all ages, that have been without a revelation. In what gross darkness and brutal stupidity have such places, in these matters, always been overwhelmed! and how many, and how great and foolish mistakes, and what endless uncertainty and differences of opinion have there been among the most learned and philosophical! Yet there never was a real trial how it would be with mankind in this respect, without having any thing, any way, from revelation. I believe that most of those parts of natural religion, that were holden by the heathens before Christ came into the world, were owing to tradition from those of their forefathers that had the light of revelation; and many of those being most evidently agreeable to reason, were more easily upholden and propagated; and especially, because many of their wise men, and men that had influence and rule over them, who saw their rectitude and agreeableness to reason better than others, did, as it were, renew them from time to time, and used to travel into other countries, and gather up remains of truth, which they found scattered about in other parts of the world, preserved in the same manner by tradition: and some of them travelled to that part of the world, that had divine revelation in their possession: and those things among them which appeared most agreeable to their reason, they transplanted to their own country. Ju-

dea was a sort of light among the nations, though they did not know it. The practice and principles of that country had this influence, that it kept the neighbouring nations in remembrance of their traditions, which they had from their forefathers, that professed the same truths; and so kept them from degenerating so much as otherwise they would have done.

The philosophers had the foundation of most of their truths, from the ancients, or from the Phœnicians, or what they picked up here and there of the reliques of revelation.

How came all the heathen nations to agree in that custom of sacrificing? The light of nature did not teach it them; but without doubt they had it from tradition; and therefore, it needs not seem strange, that what of natural religion they had amongst them, came the same way. And I suppose, that most of the principles of justice, and the right rules they had of behaviour towards themselves and neighbours, were also by tradition. They were the more easily obtained; partly because they were agreeable to reason, and partly because their rulers saw the necessity of them in order to their quiet, strength, and prosperity. I am persuaded, that mankind would have been like a herd of beasts, with respect to their knowledge in all important truths, if there never had been any such thing as revelation in the world; and that they never would have risen out of their brutality. We see, that those that live at the greatest distance from revelation, as to time and place, are far the most brutish. The heathens in America, and in some of the utmost parts of Asia and Africa, are far more barbarous than those who formerly lived in Rome, Greece, Egypt, Syria and Chaldea. Their traditions are more worn out, and they are more distant from places enlightened with revelation. The Chinese probably being descended from the people that Noah, that holy man, immediately reigned over for many hundred years, and being much separated from other nations,
have

have held more by tradition from Noah, than other nations, and so have been a more civilized people. The increase of learning and philosophy in the Christian world, is owing to revelation. The doctrines of the word of God, are the foundation of all useful and excellent knowledge. The word of God leads barbarous nations into the way of using their understandings, and brings their minds off from sensitive objects, and leads them into a way of reflecting and abstracted reasoning and consideration; and delivers from uncertainty in the first principles, such as, the being of God, and the dependence of all things upon him, and being subject to his influence and providence, and being ordered by his wisdom. Such principles as these, are the basis of all true philosophy, as appears more and more, as philosophy improves. Revelation delivers mankind from that distraction and confusion, which discourages all attempts to improve in knowledge. Revelation is that light in the world, from whence hath beamed forth, not only the knowledge of religion, but all valuable truth: It is the fountain of that light, which has enlightened the understandings of men with all sorts of knowledge. Revelation actually gives men a most rational account of religion and morality, and the highest philosophy, and all the greatest things that belong to learning, concerning God, the world, human nature, spirits, providence, time and eternity. Revelation brings nations to rational, studious consideration, and there is nothing else will do it; for nothing else will convince them that it is worth the while to be at the pains of it. Revelation does not only give us the foundation and first principles of all learning, but it gives us the end, and the only end that would be sufficient to move man to the pursuit. If it were not for revelation, nations and public communities would see no reason to encourage such speculations, and to uphold an order of men who should make speculation the business of their lives.

Revelation redeems nations from a vicious, sinful, and brutish way of living, which will effectually keep out learning. It is therefore unreasonable to suppose, that philosophy might supply the defect of revelation. Without revelation, there would be no such thing as any good philosophy; that is, except now and then, in some rare instances, and those attended with abundance of darkness and imperfection.

We hardly can have a conception how it would be, if there never had been any revelation: for we are bred up in the light of revelation, from our very infancy. If there was a nation of philosophers, where all were taught philosophy, as soon as they came to be capable of understanding any thing, and so were bred up in it, they would be surprized at the ignorance, the thoughtlessness of a people, that did not meddle with it. They would wonder that they could have so little reflection, and that they should be so ignorant of these and those things, that were so plain and easy to them. Knowledge is easy to us that understand by revelation; but we do not know what brutes we should have been, if there never had been any revelation.

20. As Moses was so intimately conversant with God, and so continually under the divine conduct, it cannot be thought, that when he wrote the history of the creation and fall of man, and the history of the church from the creation, he should not be under the divine direction in such an affair. Doubtless he wrote by God's direction, as we are informed that he wrote the law and history of the Israelitish church; and the other histories of the Old Testament were written by their prophets; for they used to be the writers of the history of the church, 1 Chron. xxix. 29.

21. It is certainly necessary, that, in the word of God, we should have a history of the life of Christ,
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of his incarnation, of his death, of his resurrection and ascension, and of his actions in the world, and of the instructions he gave the world. If there be any history that is divine, without doubt we have some divine history of this kind, because we cannot be Christians without it. And it is reasonable to suppose, that we have some farther revelation of the doctrines of the gospel, besides what we have in this history of the life of Christ : because we are there informed, that the disciples were not fully instructed, because they could not bear many Christian doctrines at that time : John xvi. 12, 13. " Jesus said, I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now ; howbeit, when the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth." It is reasonable to suppose, that the Christian church should have delivered unto them, that more full discovery of truth, that the Holy Ghost gave the apostles, when he descended ; for this more full and clear revelation was given them for the Christian church, and not for themselves only. But we have not this at all, if we have it not in the epistles of the apostles. It is also exceedingly agreeable to reason, that we should have some divine account of the first beginning and establishment of the Christian church, the history of the apostles, the calling of the Gentiles, and the success of the gospel after Christ's resurrection, so much spoken of by Christ, and in the Old Testament. But we have this nowhere but in Luke's Acts of the Apostles. It is also reasonable to expect, that the Christian church should have some prophecy of the future changes that it was to pass through to the end of the world : for it has, we know, been God's method, from the beginning of the world, to inform his church, beforehand, something of their future state. We cannot therefore think, that the Christian church, from Christ to the end of the world, should have nothing of this nature. But we have such a prophecy nowhere, if it is not in the book of the Revelation.

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We may certainly conclude, that God expects that those books of the New Testament, which are, and have been received by the Christian church as apostolical writings, should be received by us as parts of the New Testament, except there be some distinguishing mark, some apparent difference in them, or in something relating to them that we can come at, that directs us which to choose, and which to refuse. If God expects that we shall receive any New Testament at all, we must suppose that God's providence would be concerned in this matter. If he has ordered it so, in his providence, that such and such books should be put into the New Testament, received by his church, and from age to age delivered down as such, without any distinguishing properties or circumstances, it is his plain voice to us, that we must receive them as his word. God took this care with respect to the books of the Old Testament, that no books should be received by the Jewish church, and delivered down in the canon of the Old Testament, but what were his word, and owned by Christ. We may therefore conclude, that he would still take the same care of his church, with respect to the New Testament.

22. It seems to me an unaccountable dulness, that when intelligent men read David's psalms, and other prayers and songs of the Old Testament, they are not at once convinced, that the Jews had the true worship and communion of the One great and holy God; and that no other nation upon earth had them. It seems as clear as the sun at noon-day; and so indeed from all the histories and prophecies of the Old Testament.

23. We need not wonder at all, that God should so often, and continually, reveal himself by prophets and miracles, and by external signs and tokens of his presence and will, to the Israelitish nation, and that now we should see nothing of this nature, no immediate
open

open revelations or communications, any more than if there was no God. We need not wonder at it. For this way of revealing himself, as God used to do to that nation, is not at all suitable to the present state of the church. The church was *then* confined to one particular nation, that God chose out on purpose to make them the receptacle of his revelation, and the conveyancer of it to the rest of the world. And I can think of no other way that it could be done with any tolerable convenience, but by a chosen peculiar nation, that should alone be God's people, and have the true religion among them. Therefore, it was highly convenient and necessary, that there should be such a manner of communication, with such a nation. It was also necessary, in the first *transition* of this revelation from the Jews to the world, as it was in the apostles times, that the world might receive this revelation from them, seeing God still revealing himself; and so might receive it at first from God, in the same manner as *they* received it. And, upon many other accounts, it was necessary, that inspiration and miracles should be continued, while divine revelation was in *transition* from the Jews to the world. It was necessary, for the establishing of the truth of the gospel, which was now revealed and brought out from under its types and shadows, and dark prophecies. It was necessary for the introducing of this new and most perfect and everlasting dispensation; it was necessary till the completing of the canon of scripture, &c. But that God should now, from time to time, reveal himself, after that manner, to his church, is no way necessary, nor at all suitable to the gospel state of the church, which is not any particular inclosure, but is dispersed through the whole world. The church is made up of the true worshippers of God, through the world, without any walls or dividing bounds. And how is it practicable that God should treat with the church now, in such a way as he did with that peculiar nation? Besides, if it were practicable, it would be
 very

very impertinent; for, what need of new revelations to the end of the world? Is it not better that God should give the world a book, that should be the summary of his will, to which all nations in all ages may resort, to know the mind of God? It would be impertinent, because that extraordinary and miraculous way was made use of once, only for introducing the more perfect way in which the catholic church of all nations was for ever to be instructed. God now communicates himself to his church in a much more glorious and excellent way, than that by miracles, &c. by the communication of his Spirit of holiness to the hearts of his people, and his teaching, and spiritually instructing us out of the word. This is infinitely a more excellent way, as the apostle says, 1 Cor. xii. 31, &c. "But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way. Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." This is the end of the other way; it is excellent in itself: but inspiration and miracles are good for nothing without it, as the apostle plainly tells us in the 13th chapter of the 1 Corinthians. He tells us, that prophecy and miracles are nothing without charity; like sounding brass, &c. or the shadow without the substance: and seeing the substance is come, what need the shadow be continued? seeing the end is come, it would be impertinent still to continue the means. The church now enjoys that glory, in comparison with which, all the glory of prophecy and miracles, even those of that extraordinary prophet Moses, is no glory at all, as the apostle tells us, 2 Cor. iii. 10.

24. If there be any such thing needful, or at all proper and suitable, that God should reveal himself to mankind; it is impossible that he should do it in any other way, or with any other kind of evidence, than he has done it. There are no other ways possible but these; either inspiration, or God's appearing;

pearing; causing some visible appearance and audible voice, or sending his angels, or his own assuming a body and becoming incarnate. And there are all the kinds of evidence of this revelation, that it is possible a revelation should have. There are all kinds of internal evidences, from the majesty, holiness, sublimity, harmony, &c. of the scriptures; and there are all kinds of external evidences, prophecy and miracles. And as to the miracles that it has been confirmed by, there are all kinds that can be conceived of. There is no kind of miracle can be thought of, that would be more evidential, than those by which Christianity has been confirmed.

25. It is no argument against the reality of the incarnation of Jesus Christ, whereby God became the same person with a man, that it is such a strange thing, that there is nothing else like it, or that bears any shadow of it, any where to be seen; because it was evidently God's design to shew his wisdom, by doing a thing that was, and for ever would have been, far beyond the thoughts of any creatures. Man's fall, was God's opportunity to shew how far his contrivance and wisdom was beyond that of all creatures.

26. It was often prophesied of old among the children of Israel, that other gods, the gods of the nations round about, should perish from off the earth; and that they should cease to be acknowledged and worshipped as gods: but that the worship and acknowledgement of their God should remain for ever, and should, in due time, take place of those other gods; and that the nations abroad in the world, which then worshipped other gods, should be brought to an acknowledgement of him as the only true God; Jer. x. 11. "The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens." And so it came to pass. All those deities are exploded, and the acknowledgement of the God of Israel, the only true God, takes

takes place in all the then known part of the world, and four times as much; and it holds still. This came to pass by means of the Christian religion. It is Christ's appearing, and the preaching of his doctrine in the world, that has been the means of it all. It is by means of these, that the Mahometan parts of the world came to acknowledge the One God: and it is by these means, that even the deists come to it.

Again, it has been only by means of Jesus Christ's appearing and teaching, that the world ever came to have any clear, distinct, and rational notions about a future state; notions most agreeable to the obscure intimations in the Old Testament; that are evidently only those things set in a plain and open view, that were then seen but through a veil; notions most agreeable to the divine nature and dispensations, and every way agreeable to reason.

It is a confirmation that God designed that the Christian religion should succeed the Jewish; that, speedily after the bringing in of the Christian religion into the world, God, in his providence, by the destruction of the temple, and dispersion of the nation of the Jews, made the Jewish religion impracticable, and has continued it so for a longer time than ever it was practicable. It was prophesied of old, that God should be acknowledged and worshipped by other nations, and that other nations were to be God's people. Therefore, there was a religion to succeed the Jewish, very different as to external worship; because the Jewish religion was not fitted for more than a single nation: nor is it practicable by the world in general. But the Christian religion is exceedingly fitted for universal practice.

27. There are these things remarkable in Christ's raising Lazarus from the dead, John xi.; viz. that he called upon God, before he did it, to do it for him; and thanked him that he had heard him; and told him, that he knew that he heard him always: and when he spake to him, he called him Father; and told

told him, that he spake to him for that end, that others that stood by, when they should see that what he asked of him, was granted in such an extraordinary thing, might believe that he sent him. Now, can it be imagined, that God would hear an impostor? or so order or suffer it, that so extraordinary a thing should be done immediately, in consequence of the request and act of an impostor, who was so impudent, when he asked it, as to call him Father, and told him that he always heard him, and told him that he spake thus for this end, that others might see, that he did indeed give a testimony to his mission and authority, by doing it at his request, in such a manner?

28. It is an evidence that the apostles had their doctrine from inspiration of some invisible guide and instructor, that there was such a vast and apparent difference made in them at once after Pentecost. They were illiterate, simple, undesigning, ignorant men, before; but afterward, how do they talk in their speeches and epistles! they do not speak as being in the least at a loss about the scheme of salvation, and the divine gospel mysteries. With what positiveness and authority do they teach! in how learned and understanding a manner! How came Saul by his scheme, and by all his knowledge of the Christian doctrines and mysteries immediately upon his conversion? he was evidently under the influence of some spirit in his teaching.

29. Christ joined pardoning sins with his healing the sick. When one came to be healed, he first told him, that his sins were forgiven; and when the Jews were stumbled at it, and found fault that he should pretend to forgive sins, then, immediately upon it, he heals the person's disease, that they might believe that he had the power to forgive sins, and tells them that he does it for this end, Matt. ix. 2.; Mark, ii. 3.; Luke, v. 18. Now, if Christ were an
C impostor,

impostor, can it be believed, that God would so countenance such horrid blasphemy as this would be, to enable him to cure the disease by a word speaking, a work which God appropriates to himself as his own work, and joins it to forgiving iniquities; and mentions them as both alike his peculiar works? Pf. ciii. 3. Would God give an impostor this attestation to his blasphemous lie, when he pretended to do it as an attestation to his divine mission?

30. Christ, by the works which he wrought, shewed that he had an absolute and sovereign power over the course of nature, and over the spiritual and invisible world, and over the bodies and souls of men, as Dr Sharp observes. It was not so with other prophets that were wont to work miracles. They could not work what miracles they pleased, and when they pleased. They could work miracles, only when they were excited and directed to it by a special command or impulse from heaven. But Christ wrought miracles in a constant course from the time of his beginning his public ministry. They sought to him for this end, and he wrought them as of his own power at all times. They came to him for it, under the notion that he was able; and this, Christ required that they should believe in order to it; to which never any prophet pretended. Moses was shut out of the land of Canaan, partly for working a miracle in his own name, and not sanctifying the Lord God. "Must we fetch water out of this rock?" said he. The prophets never pretended that they themselves had properly any power to work miracles; but disclaimed it. God never subjected the course of nature to them, to work miracles by their own word and command upon all occasions. Care was taken, in all the miracles that God wrought, wherein he made any use of the prophets, that it should be visible, that what was done, was done only by God; and that what they said or did, upon which the miracle was wrought, was by particular revelation from heaven. They that came to Christ, that
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he might work miracles for them, did it in the faith, that by his own power and holiness he was able to do it for them. The leper said, Matt. viii. 2. "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." He believed that Christ could work miracles, when he would. This, Christ approved of. Matt. viii. 8. "But speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed." Matt. ix. 18. "My daughter is even now dead; but come and lay thine hand on her, and she shall live." Matt. ix. 28. "Believe ye that I am able to do this? they said unto him, Yea, Lord." Matt. ix. 21. "If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole." Matt. xvi. 9.; Christ there reproves his disciples, because they were afraid of wanting bread, not remembering how he had fed multitudes in the wilderness: which implies, that he was able to do the like again when he pleased. He cast out devils as of his own power and authority; Mark i. 27. "With authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him." And Christ, as having power of his own to work miracles, gave power to his disciples, as Matt. x.; Mark iii. 14., and vii. 7., &c.; and Luke ix. and x.; and so miracles were wrought in Christ's name, by the apostles, and many other disciples. Moses did not work those miracles, that were wrought in his time; nor did he in the least pretend to any such thing. But Christ did pretend to work his miracles. They are often spoken of, and he himself speaks of them, as works that he did: yea, he declares himself fellow with God in working; John v. 17. "My father worketh hitherto, and I work."

31. If there must be a revelation, it is convincing, that the Christian revelation is the true one; that it has been by the means of this revelation, and this only, that the world has come to the knowledge of the one only true God. Till this came, all the world lay in ignorance of him. But when this came, it was successful to bring the world to the acknowledgement of him. It is from hence that all that part of

the world that owns the one only true God; whether Christians, Jews, Mahometans, or Deists, have received that knowledge. If there be a true revelation in the world, it is not to be supposed, that God would so order things, that it should not be by that true revelation, but by a false one, an imposture, that the world should come to the knowledge of the true God.

And this is evidential, that the Christian revelation is that which God designed as the proper means to bring the world to the knowledge of himself, rather than any other revelation, and rather than human reason. For it is unreasonable to suppose, that God would so order it, that another means, and that only, which God did not design as proper means for the obtaining this effect, should actually obtain it. If the Christian revelation be not the proper means to bring the world to the knowledge of the true God, it is strange that the world, which was before ignorant of him, should be brought to the knowledge of him by it; and no part of it ever be brought to the knowledge of him by any other means, which may be supposed to be the means which God designed for this end.

32. It is an argument of the truth of the Christian revelation, that there is nothing else that informs us, what God designs by that series of revolutions and events that are brought to pass in the world; what end he seeks, and what scheme he has laid out; agreeably to the challenge which God makes to the gods and prophets and teachers of the heathen world, Isa. xli. 22, 23. It is most fit, that the intelligent beings of the world should be made acquainted with it. They are the beings that are principally concerned in it. The thing that is God's great design, is something concerning them; and the revolutions by which it is to be brought to pass, are revolutions among them, and in their state. The state of the inanimate, unperceiving part of the world, is nothing regarded

regarded any otherwise, than in a subserviency to the perceiving and intelligent part. And it is most rational to suppose, that God should reveal the design he has been carrying on, to his rational creatures; that as God has made them capable of it, they may actively fall in with and promote it, acting herein as the subjects and friends of God.

The Christian revelation ever was a most rational account of the design of God, in his providential disposition of things; a design most worthy of an infinitely wise, holy, and perfect being; and of the way and means of God's accomplishment of it. It gives us an account of the principal parts of the scheme, in the principal providences from the beginning of the world to the end of it; and particularly of the manner how all shall be perfected in the consummation of all things.

33. The doctrine of the general resurrection at the end of the world, upon many accounts, seems to me a most credible doctrine. There are a multitude of resemblances of it in nature and providence, which, I doubt not, were designed on purpose to be types of it. It seems credible on this account, that the work of the Redeemer is wholly a restoring work from beginning to end; and it seems rational to think, that he would therefore be thorough in it, and would make a thorough restoration, and repair all the ruins that were brought on the world by sin. It is the glory of the restorer, that he appears as an all-sufficient and complete restorer.

34. If the New Testament be not a true revelation of God, then God never yet has given the world any clear revelation of a future state. But if a revelation be needful upon any account, it is upon this, viz. that we may have some certain and distinct knowledge of the future invisible world, that we are to be in after death, and after this world comes to an end. We must therefore, suppose, that God did design a further revelation than the Old Testament, because a

future state was not clearly revealed by that. And it is not credible, that God should defer it to this time; partly by reason of the length of time since the finishing of that revelation, which is about two thousand years. If that revelation was only introductory to another, it is hardly credible that there should be so long a space between the introduction and that other revelation, to which it was an introduction. Besides, this clear revelation of a future state would now be out of season; because all the world has already received the doctrine of a future world for many ages. If God designed a true revelation, it is not probable that he would suffer that any false revelation should anticipate it, and do the work beforehand. And, upon many other accounts that might be mentioned, it is incredible that the true revelation should still be deferred.

35. It is very unreasonable to make it an objection against the Christian revelation, that it contains some things that are very mysterious and difficult to our understandings, and that seem to us impossible. If God will give us a revelation from heaven of the very truth, concerning his own nature, acts, counsels, and ways, and of the spiritual and invisible world; it is unreasonable to expect any other, than that there should be many things in such a revelation, that should be utterly beyond our understanding, and seem impossible. For when was there ever a time, when, if there had been a revelation of the very truth in philosophical matters, and concerning the nature of created things, which are of a vastly lower nature, and must be supposed more proportioned to our understandings; there would not have been many things which would have appeared, not only to the vulgar, but to the learned of that age, absurd and impossible? If many of those positions in philosophy, which are now received by the learned world as indubitable truths, had been revealed from heaven to be truths in past ages, they would have been looked upon as
mysterious

mysterious and difficult, and would have seemed as impossible as the most mysterious Christian doctrines do now. I believe, that if, even now, there should come a revelation from heaven of what is the very truth in these matters, without deviating at all to accommodate it to our received notions and principles, there would be many things in it that would seem absurd and contradictory. I do now receive principles as certain, which once, if they had been told me, I should have looked upon as being as difficult as any mystery in the Bible. Without doubt, much of the difficulty that we have about the doctrines of Christianity, arises from wrong principles that we receive. We find that those things which are received as principles in one age, and are never once questioned, concerning which it comes into nobody's thoughts that they possibly may not be true; are yet exploded in another age, as light increases. If God make a revelation to us, he must reveal to us the truth as it is, without accommodating himself to our notions and principles; which would indeed be impossible: for those things which are our received notions in one age, are contrary to what are so in another; and the word of God was not given for any particular age, but for all ages. It surely becomes us to receive what God reveals to be truth, and to look upon his word as proof sufficient; whether what he reveals squares with our notions or not.

I rather wonder that the word of God contains no more mysteries in it; and I believe it is because God is so tender of us, and considers the weakness of our sight, and reveals only such things as he sees that man, though so weak a creature, if of an humble and an honest mind, can well enough bear. Such a kind of tenderness we see in Christ towards his disciples, who had many things to say, but forbore, because they could not bear them yet. Though God does not depart from truth to accommodate himself to our manner of thinking, yet I believe he accommodates himself to our way of understanding, in his manner of expressing

expressing and representing things ; as we are wont to do, when we are teaching little children.

36. What can be more reasonable, than to believe a man, when he comes and tells us, that he is sent from God, and will heal the diseases of our souls, and, that we may believe him, tells us, he will heal the diseases of our bodies ; and accordingly heals all sorts of men, at all times, of all manner of diseases, by a touch or a word ; and plainly shows that he can do it when he will, and let the disease be what it will ? He tells us that he will dispossess Satan of our souls, and free us from his power and dominion ; and to prove that he has power to do as he says, he, before our eyes, dispossesses him of the bodies of men that he possessed ; does it very often, and for a long time together ; so as plainly to shew, that he has power over those unclean spirits, and can conquer them, and eject them at pleasure, and do what he will with them. He tells us, that he will deliver us from spiritual and eternal death, and also from temporal death ; that he will raise us from the dead, and give us eternal life ; so that we shall live for ever, and not die : and to prove this, he gives us sensible evidence that he has power over men's lives ; not only by prolonging their lives, but even by restoring them after they are dead ; and besides, rises from the dead himself. He tells us, that he will bestow heavenly glory upon us ; will translate us to heaven : and, to confirm us in the belief that he will so do, tells us, that we shall see himself, after his death, ascend into heaven. What more could we desire from a man that pretends to come from God, and to have power to do these things for us, than to give us such evidences of his power as these ? He tells us that he will undertake for us, and appear for us before God, and that he will ask mercy for us of him ; and tells us, that we need not doubt but that, if he appears and pleads for us, he shall procure acceptance for us. For God so loves him, that he always hears him, and grants

grants what he asks of him : and, that we may see that it is true, he does, in our hearing, ask of God strange things, as particularly asks of God concerning a dead man, that had been dead four days, that he may come to life again ; and tells God, that he asks it for this end, that we may see that he always hears him, and grants what he requests : and accordingly, at his request, the dead man comes to life.

37. Dr Tillotson shews, in sermons 120, 121, 122, 123, first, what arguments natural reason furnishes us with, that there is a future state ; and how this was a received principle among all nations, both in former and in latter ages of the world ; and how it was looked upon as exceedingly probable by the wisest of the philosophers, who yet seemed to long for a greater certainty, and to have it plainly revealed, whether it was so or not ; and having shewn what expectations the Jews had from the light of nature, together with the more obscure revelations made to them of it, he then proceeds to shew how fully this matter is brought to light by the gospel, that seemed somewhat obscure before ; in that, 1. The gospel makes a most clear and express revelation of it ; absolutely and plainly, and abundantly discovers the thing : and, 2. That it is not only revealed and declared ; but that state is described with its very particular circumstances : And, says the Doctor, 3. " The gospel gives
 " us yet farther assurance of these things, by such an
 " argument as is most likely to be convincing and
 " satisfactory to common capacities, and that is,
 " by a lively instance of the thing to be proved, in
 " raising Christ from the dead ; Acts xvii. 30, 31.—
 " It is true, indeed, under the Old Testament there
 " were two instances somewhat of that nature. E-
 " noch and Elias were immediately translated and
 " taken up into heaven. But those two instances do
 " in many respects fall short of the other. For after
 " Christ was raised from the dead, he conversed
 " forty

“ forty days with his disciples, and satisfied them
 “ that he was risen. After which he was in their
 “ sight visibly taken up into heaven: and as an evi-
 “ dence that he was possessed of his glorious king-
 “ dom, he sent down, according to his promise, his
 “ Holy Spirit in miraculous gifts, to assure them, by
 “ these testimonies of his royalty, that he was in
 “ heaven, and to qualify them by these miraculous
 “ powers, to convince the world of the truth of their
 “ doctrine. And what argument more proper to
 “ convince them of another life after this, than to
 “ see a man raised from the dead and restored to a
 “ new life? What fitter to satisfy a man concerning
 “ heaven and the happy state of those there, than to
 “ see one visibly taken up into heaven? And what
 “ more fit to assure us that the promises of the gospel
 “ are real, and shall be made good to us, than to
 “ see him who made those promises to us, raise him-
 “ self from the dead, and go up into heaven, and
 “ from thence dispense miraculous gifts abroad in
 “ the world, as evidences of the power and authori-
 “ ty which he is invested withal? All the philoso-
 “ phical arguments which a man can bring for the
 “ soul’s immortality and another life, will have no
 “ force upon vulgar apprehensions, in comparison of
 “ these sensible demonstrations, which give an experi-
 “ ment of the thing, and furnish us with an in-
 “ stance of something of the same kind, and of e-
 “ qual difficulty with that which is propounded to
 “ our belief.”

38. *Question*: Why was not Christ, after he rose
 from the dead, during his stay upon earth, with his
 disciples, as he was before? Why was he not with
 them, constantly dwelling with them, and going in
 and out with them? *Answer*: The very different
 states that Christ and his disciples were now in, would
 not allow of it. Christ, before his death, and while
 in a state of humiliation, was in a like state with
 them. He was subject to hunger and thirst, as they
 were;

were; he needed sleep as they did; he needed the like defence from the weather that they did, and the like: and he was in a state suitable for a cohabitation with them. But when he was risen from the dead, the case was exceedingly altered. He no longer continued in a state of humiliation; but then began his exaltation. He put off mortality; he put off all the infirmities of his body. The nature of his body was exceedingly different from theirs; as things celestial differ from things terrestrial. Mortal beings are not apt for a cohabitation with immortal; nor terrestrial with celestial; nor corruption with incorruption.

Besides, if Christ had been constantly with his disciples, and dwelt with them, and gone in and out with them amongst men as before; then he must have appeared either in his former mean state, or in his glorified state. If he had appeared in his former mean state, that would have been to have continued his state of humiliation, after his resurrection, and finishing the work of redemption, and his triumph over the powers of darkness. He must have remained still in the form of a servant; he must still have remained empty of his glory, or with his glory veiled. The circumstances of the disciples yet in this corrupt and mortal state, and the state of this world, would no way admit of his appearing as an inhabitant of this world, and dwelling here with them in his glorified state. The disciples were not meet to dwell with a glorified Saviour. That would have been to have exalted them to a glorified state as to their objective glory and happiness, while they, the subjects, remained still in their corrupt, infirm, and mortal state; which would have been no way suitable. God will not thus mix and confound heaven and earth.

39. Much of the scriptures is apt to seem insipid to us now, and as though there were no great matter of instruction in it; because these points of instruction that are most plainly contained in it, are old to us, and

and what we and every body have been taught from our infancy; and they have been most plainly taught in the world these many hundred years; so that the doctrines seem self-evident, and so plain to us now, that there seems to have been no need of a particular revelation of such things; especially of insisting upon them so much. But it seems exceedingly different to us now, from what it would have done, if we had lived in those times when the revelation was given, when the things were in a great measure new, at least as to that distinctness and expressiveness of their revelation. It is so now with some of those that seem to us very plain points of what is now called natural religion. If we had an idea of the state the world was in then, when God gave the revelation, they would appear glorious instructions, bringing great light into the world, and most worthy of God. We are ready to despise that which we are so used to, and which is so common and old to us, and the world; as the children of Israel despised manna.

40. It was not a thing allowed of under the Old Testament, nor approved of by the O'd Testament saints, to hate personal enemies, to wish ill to them, to wish for revenge, or to pray for their hurt; except it was as prophets, and as speaking in the name of the Lord. So that there is no inconsistency between the religion of the Old Testament and New, in this respect. The apostle Paul himself doth thus imprecate vengeance on his enemies; 2 Tim. iv. 14. "Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil; the Lord reward him according to his works." Revenge, or a desire of it, was forbidden by the law of Moses, Levit. xix. 18.; yea, there, the love of our enemy is implicitly commanded. For he that we are to love as ourselves, is the same that we are there forbidden to avenge ourselves upon; which is doubtless our enemy, or he that injures us. Doing good to enemies, is required by the law of Moses; Exod. xxiii. 45. "If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass
going

going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again. If thou seeest the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, and wouldst forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him." And this was agreeable to the sense of the saints of those times, as appears from Job xxxi. 29. "If I rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me, or lifted up myself when evil found him." Prov. xxiv. 17. "Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, nor let thine heart be glad when he stumbleth." And, xvii. 5. "He that is glad at calamities, shall not go unpunished." We cannot think that those imprecations we find in the Psalms and Prophets, were out of their own hearts; for cursing is spoken of as a very dreadful sin in the Old Testament; and David, whom we hear, oftener than any other, praying for vengeance on his enemies, by the history of his life, was a man of a spirit very remote from a spiteful, revengeful spirit. Yea, we have no such instance in all the Old Testament; as appears by his behaviour when persecuted by Saul; when he heard of his death; and upon occasion of the death of Ishbosheth and Abner; and Shimei's cursing him, &c. He himself in the Psalms gives us an account of his wishing well to his enemies, and doing good to them, Psal. vii. 4.; praying for them, and grieving at their calamities, Psal. xxxv. 13. 14. And when he prayed for those dreadful curses upon Ahitophel, he was especially far from a revengeful frame, as appears by his behaviour when Shimei cursed him. And some of the most terrible imprecations that we find in all the Old Testament, are in the New spoken of as prophetic, even those in the 109th Psalm; as in Acts i. 20. Jer. xii. 3. "Pull them out like sheep for the slaughter, and prepare them for the day of slaughter." When we find passages of this kind in the Psalms or the Prophets, we are to look upon them as prophetic curses. They curse them in the name of the Lord, as Elisha did the children that mocked him, or as Noah cursed Canaan. We have instances of this

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kind even in the apostles and the disciples of the Lamb of God, as Paul curses Alexander the copper-smith, 2 Tim. iv. 14.; and Peter says to Simon Magus, "Thy money perish with thee." Or else they wish them ill, not as personal, but as public enemies to the church of God. Sometimes what they say is in the name of the church, see Jer. v. 34, 35.; Mat. i. 19. "Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily." This is a remarkable and eminent instance of a Christian spirit; and this verse is an evidence, that that meekness, gentleness, forgiveness, and kindness to enemies which the gospel prescribes, were duties under the law, and before Christ came.

41. I once told a boy of about thirteen years of age, that a piece of any matter, of two inches square, was eight times so big as one of but one inch square; or that it might be cut into eight pieces, all of them as big as that of but one inch square. He seemed at first not to think me in earnest, and to suspect that I only meant to make a game of him. But when I had taken considerable pains to convince him that I was in earnest, and that I knew what I said to be true; he seemed to be astonished at my positiveness; and cried out of the impossibility and absurdity of it; and would argue, how was it possible for two inches to be eight inches! and all that I could say, did not prevail upon him, to make him believe it. I suppose it seemed to him as great and evident a contradiction, that that which was but just twice so long, and twice so broad, and twice so thick, but just twice so big every way, should yet be eight times so big; as that twice one should make eight, or any other absurdity whatsoever. And when I afterwards shewed him the truth of it, by cutting out two cubes, one an inch, and another two inches square; and let him examine the measures, and see that the measures were exact, and that there was no deceit; and cut the two inch cube

cube into eight equal parts, and he counted the parts over and over, and took the parts one by one and compared them with the one inch cube, and spent some time in counting and comparing; he seemed to be astonished, as though there were some witchcraft in the case; and hardly to believe it after all. For he did not yet at all see the reason of it. I believe it was a much more difficult mystery to him, than the Trinity ordinarily is, to men: and seemed to him more evidently to be a contradiction in it, than ever there did in any mystery of religion to a Socinian or Deist. And why should not we suppose, that there may be some things that are true, that may be as much above our understandings, and as difficult to them, as this truth was unto this boy? Doubtless there is a vastly greater difference between our understandings and God's, than between this boy's, and that of the greatest philosopher or mathematician.

42. Though some may be ready to object against the Christian religion, that there seem to be innumerable difficulties and inconsistencies attending it, which would appear to be insolvable, but only as a multitude of heads have been employed for many ages, to find out solutions for them; innumerable attempts have been made, and multitudes have been rejected, one after another, as insufficient, for the sake of others that have been thought less liable to objection; till at length such solutions have been found out for many of them, as are in some measure plausible. But there is nothing, no history, nor scheme of doctrine, nor set of principles whatever, however inconsistent, absurd and confused, but what might be made to seem consistent at this rate: no difficulties nor inconsistencies, but what something plausible might be found out to colour them over, and hide them, by so much search and study, by a combination of such multitudes, through so many ages.

To this I answer, That as there has been a long time to answer objections, so there has been a long time to strengthen them. As there have been many ages to solve difficulties, so there have been as many to find out difficulties and inconsistencies. Falsehood in things that are in like manner complicated, as all that is contained in the whole compass of the scheme of the Christian religion, must needs be attended with numberless things that may discover it; more and more of which will appear by time. Besides, there has been all this time to make difficulties more plain, and bring out inconsistencies more to the light; and by thorough and exact consideration to make them more manifest and apparent, by setting forth all things more exactly and minutely as they be. Time wonderfully brings truth to light, and wears off by degrees false colourings and disguises. The truth will always have most advantage by time. Appearing inconsistencies, being founded on truth, will grow plainer and plainer, and difficulties more and more evident. Time will discover more circumstances to strengthen and confirm them, and so pretences of solution will appear more and more evidently absurd and ridiculous. When there are contending parties that contend by argument and search and inquiry, time greatly helps that party that has truth on its side, and weakens the contrary side. It gradually wears away the sandy foundation, and rots away the building that is not made of substantial materials. The Christian religion has evermore, in all ages, had its enemies, and that among learned men. Yea, it is observable, that there have commonly been some of the most subtle of men to scan the Christian scheme, and to discover the objections that ly against it, and have done it with a good will to overthrow it. Thus it was in Judea, in the infancy of the church. The Scribes and Pharisees, and the wise men among the Jews, employed all their wisdom against it. Thus, in the first ages of the church, not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble were called. But
Christianity

Christianity had the wisdom, learning and subtilty of the world to oppose it. So, of latter ages, how many learned and subtle men have done their utmost against Christianity? So that the length of time that there has been for persons to strengthen their own side in this controversy, that is brought as an objection against Christianity, is much more of an argument for it, than an objection against it.

43. If there be a revelation that God makes to the world, it is most reasonable to suppose, and natural to expect, that he should therein make known not only what manner of being he is, but also that he should lead mankind to an understanding of his works of creation and providence; that he should give them some account how the world came into being, and also some account of his works of providence, that mankind may understand something of God's scope and design in continuing the world in being for so many ages, and in that series of events, great changes and revolutions, and many strange things that are brought to pass in it, in the successive ages of it; and that men may know something of God's scheme of providence, and so much of his scope and design, as to be able to see something of the wisdom and other perfections of God in the course of things, and that may be of some direction to them how to regulate themselves, so as to concur with, and not to contradict the holy and wise scheme of the Governor of the world.

These things the Christian revelation opens to us in such a manner as might be expected. This only gives any tolerable account of the work of creation, and this reveals to us the scheme of providence, and what is God's particular main design in the whole series of providence, a design worthy of himself; what great work that is, which is his main work, the main design of providence, to which all events and revolutions of providence are subordinate: what is the thing that God is doing; what contrivance he

is accomplishing; what God has done in order to it, from the beginning of the world in the several ages of it. And we are shewn how these events all point to the main great work of Power, Wisdom, and Grace, that is the hinge of all. We have a particular account how this greatest work of all has actually been wrought in the fulness of time, as to those great acts that are the main ground of it; how that was foretold in the several ages of the world. We have these prophecies still extant in this revelation; and we have a history of the series of events, down from the creation of the world to that time, which were preparatory to it; and then, after that, of the great events of God's providence that were immediately consequent on it, to establish the first fruits of it in the world; with a prophecy of the main events yet to be accomplished in pursuance of the same great scheme, and a description of the end of the world; an account of the winding up of all things, and after what manner the scheme of God shall be finished, and his great design and great work consummated, and all things brought to their last end, and settled in their ultimate state, to remain throughout eternity.

These things are such as are exceedingly agreeable to a most natural and rational supposition, in case God makes a revelation to mankind. But if the scriptures are not a revelation of God, then man, the principal creature God has made in this world, the only intelligent creature, to whom he has subjected this lower part of the creation, is left wholly and entirely in the dark about God's works both of creation and providence, and has nothing whereby to judge what God's scheme is, in all the great changes he sees come to pass in the world, from one age to another; or what he aims at or intends to accomplish. Every thing lies in darkness and confusion before him, without any possibility of his determining any thing, or to direct him what to think of God's works which he beholds, or what affections he should exercise towards the Supreme Governor, on occasion of them;
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or how he shall, in the course of his practice, inform himself of God's scope; or admire and adore him, submit to him, serve him, and praise him, as the Supreme Lord of the world, and Orderer of all things; or act towards the Governor of the world, as becomes a rational and intelligent subject of his kingdom.

44. With respect to that objection against the truth of the Christian religion, that the apostles seem often to speak of the coming of Christ to judgement, as if they thought it near at hand; first, I will begin with the apostle Paul, or what he says that may have such a look. And,

(1.) What he says in the first epistle to the Thessalonians, which is reckoned to be the first of his epistles in the order of time; and particularly in the iv. chap. 15, 16, and 17. verses; "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep: for the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we be ever with the Lord." Now, from this place, some may be ready to say, that here the apostle plainly speaks, as though he expected this coming of Christ, while the bigger part of the Christians that were then alive, should be living. He speaks of those that should then be alive, in the first person plural; and of those that should be asleep, in the third person plural. Whereas, if he expected that the day of judgment would be long after they were all dead, then, it would have been more natural for him to speak of those that should then be asleep, and should come with Christ, in the first person; because he supposes that he, and all those to whom he was speaking, would be some of them: and
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to have spoken of those that should be alive, in the third person; because he supposed they would be those, among whom, none of those that then lived, should be. Thus it would have been more natural for him to have said, They which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent *us*, who shall then be asleep. And in the 17. verse, "Then they which are alive, and remain, shall be caught up together with *us*."

To this, I say,

1st, That considering the scope of the apostle in these verses, all that can be inferred from such a manner of speaking, is, that it might, for ought was then revealed, be while they lived. For the scope of the apostle was to comfort the Thessalonians, concerning their friends that were already dead, with that consideration, that they should surely meet them again, if not before, yet at the day of the Lord's coming. These were those that were asleep, of whom the apostle is especially speaking. These, it was certain, were those, of whom those that the apostle is speaking to, were not some. And therefore, it was most proper and natural for the apostle to speak of them in the third person; more proper than of those that should be alive; seeing it was uncertain but that they should be of them: and the apostle's drift leads him to make such a supposition in his discourse; because he would speak of the time when, at the farthest, they should certainly again meet with their deceased friends. And if they did not meet them before, then they would be alive at that time. And it is but just to suppose, that it was only the uncertainty of the time, that was the ground of the apostle's using such a manner of expression; because he, in this very context, speaks of the time as altogether uncertain; as it follows, immediately in the beginning of the next chapter, "But of the times and seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you: for yourselves know perfectly, that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night," &c. The apostle,

apostle, by the expression he uses, probably had in his mind those words of Christ in Acts i. 7. "It is not for you to know the *times and seasons*, which the Father hath put in his own power."

We have an instance of something of a like nature with this, in the words of Joseph to his brethren, Gen. l. 25. ; "God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence." He does not say, God shall visit your posterity, and they shall carry up my bones from hence. Yet it cannot be argued, that Joseph concluded that the redemption out of Egypt, would be in that generation. Their posterity were the same Israelitish church : and very often, in the Old Testament, posterity are spoken to, and of, in their ancestors, as though they were themselves. Or here it may be observed, that though the Israelitish church that should be redeemed out of Egypt, were as much one with Joseph, as with any of his brethren, as it was Joseph's posterity as well as theirs, that were to be visited, and brought up from thence ; yet he does not speak in the first person, God will surely visit *us* ; but in the second, "God will surely visit *you* : " because it was certain that Joseph who spoke, would not then be alive ; for he was now about to leave the world : and the nature of Joseph's discourse made it necessary to distinguish between him, and those that should be thus visited ; because he is leaving a precept to them respecting himself, as one that would be then dead, viz. that they should carry up his bones. So the nature and design of the apostle's discourse to the Thessalonians, necessarily led him to distinguish between those that should be alive at Christ's coming, and the deceased relations of the Christian Thessalonians. He speaks of them as already dead, and of their now living friends, then meeting them risen from the dead.

2d, That the apostle did not intend to be understood, as though it were certain that the coming of Christ was at hand, in any such sense that he would come while they were living ; is evident, from what
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he himself says, speaking of those very words, and expressly denying that he intended any such thing; or that he supposed it to be certain, that the coming of Christ was at hand, in any such sense. See the beginning of the second chapter of the second epistle to the Thessalonians; where he very earnestly warns them not to understand him in any such sense, 1. 2. and 3. verses; "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter, as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition," &c.

Now, it is evident, that the apostle does not thus write to them the second time, endeavouring to retract any thing he had written before; because he had waited long, and found by trial, that he was like to be disappointed; but it must be because he really did not intend so at first; for it is evident, that this epistle was written soon after the other, while the same fellow-labourers were with him. Both the epistles are begun in the same manner; "Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, to the church of the Thessalonians, in God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace unto you, and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ." And both have been supposed to be written, while the apostle abode in the same city of Athens, as appears by the postscripts. And if we well observe the contents of this and the foregoing epistle, the principal occasion of the apostle's writing the second epistle so soon after the other, seems to have been an information that the apostle had received, that his former epistle had been misunderstood in this particular: and being much concerned about it, and fearing the ill consequences of such a misunderstanding, he writes in haste about it, to guard them from the mischief of such a mistake, and
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to establish them in it, that it is uncertain when the Lord will come, as he had told them before in his other epistle, in the beginning of the fifth chapter. And he argues the great uncertainty there was, whether it would be in that age or not, from what the Holy Ghost had revealed about the coming of Antichrist.

That this apostle did not expect Christ's coming in that generation, may be argued from his speaking as though he expected that those that were then alive, would rise from the dead at Christ's second coming, as in 1 Cor. vi. 14. "And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power." And, 2 Cor. iv. 14. "Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you."

From what the apostle says in this second chapter of the second epistle to the Thessalonians, there appears a necessity, that those passages in any other of his epistles, that look as though he expected that Christ would come in that age, should be understood in some other sense; and that the apostle really did not mean so, as his words on a cursory view would lead us to suppose. For here the apostle is very express, and full and earnest in it, that he would by no means be so understood, in a passage in one of his epistles that had been so misunderstood, and that looks most of all that way. And he does not say so now in this epistle to the Thessalonians, because he altered his mind since he wrote his other epistles to other churches: for those epistles that he wrote to the Thessalonians, were the first epistles that he wrote. (See the evidence of this in Roberts's key of the Bible). It is a farther evidence, that those passages in other epistles must be understood in some other sense, that there are passages in this very epistle, particularly in the first chapter, that we should be ready to think had such a look, were it not that the apostle himself, immediately in the second chapter, denies any such meaning.

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In this sense we must understand those passages, in which it is spoken of as a duty of Christians, to look and wait for the coming of the Lord Jesus; as, Titus ii. 13.; 1 Cor. i. 7.; Philip. iii. 20. This implies no more, than that they, in those days, should expect, in God's time, to see that day; and that they knew not when it would come; and that they should earnestly desire it, and be patient while it was delayed; and still look for it, and depend upon it, though it was delayed.

There is a necessity of understanding, in like manner, the following passages, which were all written after this in the second to the Thessalonians, Rom. xiii. 11. 12. "And that knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent; the day is at hand. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light." We cannot understand this as though the apostle concluded, the day of judgment would come while they lived; because he had before explained himself otherwise: but only, that the day of Christ's kingdom, which is the day of the salvation of the church of Christ, was at hand: that which the Holy Ghost had before intended by the kingdom of heaven; which, indeed, in some things that the Holy Ghost meant by it, was near at hand. Therefore, the Holy Ghost directed the apostle to use such words. And so, Philip. iv. 5. "Let your moderation be known to all men: the Lord is at hand." And Heb. x. 25. "Exhorting one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching." Christ's coming was indeed at hand in many respects; and in such respects as might well have all that influence upon those that the apostle wrote to, that he intended. There was that which was called Christ's coming, that should be in that generation: and the coming of Christ at the overthrow of the heathen empire, might well be said to be at hand; and Christ's last coming to judgment, might well, considering all things,

things, be said to be at hand, as the apostle Peter observes, though there should be thousands of years between. The apostle Paul speaks of ages to come, Eph. ii. 7. That it was not to be till many generations were past : yet it was at hand, in a sense that is agreeable to the common language of the Holy Spirit. So, Christ's first coming was spoken of as very nigh at hand, of old. Hagg. ii. 6. 7. "For thus saith the Lord of hosts, Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land, and I will shake all nations; and the desire of all nations shall come; and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts:" though it was then above 500 years to it. And when it was about 400 years, it is said, Mal. iii. 1. "The Lord whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple; even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in." And when it was about 700 years to the gospel day, it is said to be but a very little while. Isai. xxix. 17, 18. "Is it not yet a very little while, and Lebanon shall become a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest? And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness." So God represents, as though he would very quickly perform all the things prophesied of by the prophet Jeremiah, though some of them were not to be fulfilled in many ages; Jer. i. 10, 11, 12. So the time is said to be at hand, for the accomplishment of all the prophecies of the book of Revelation, and Christ's last coming at the conclusion of them; Rev. i. 3. and xxii. 7, 10, 12, 20.; though the book evidently contains a series of events of many ages.

So then, when the apostle Peter says, with respect to Christ's last coming, and its being said to be at hand, that a thousand years in God's sight are but as one day, it is no new conceit of his own, to save their own reputations; but God's language that he had used of old, justifies him in so saying. And the ex-

pression that the apostles used about the approach of Christ's coming, did not tend to the disappointment of God's people. For Christ's coming to reward them at death was at hand, when they should have such a comfortable and full prospect of their complete reward at Christ's last coming; so that they shall as it were anticipate it, and will as it were have a possession of it, and then it will appear very nigh at hand to them. Though the time appears long to us in our dim-sighted state, yet it will appear as nothing to them. The second coming of Christ was so nigh at hand, that the church of God might well take all that comfort from what was really to be understood by those expressions, that they would be ready to take from them; as the first coming of Christ was very often spoken of for the comfort of the saints of the Old Testament, under great afflictions, though they never were like to see it in this lifetime. So in the case of Zerubabel, and Joshua, and Daniel.

As to that text of the apostle in 1 Cor. x. 11. "And they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come *;" the connection of these words with the context, and the drift of the apostle in mentioning the ends of the world being come upon them, does not at all require their being understood in any other sense. For his drift is only this, that these things that had happened to the children of Israel in the wilderness, happened to them for ensamples, and were written for our sakes, though they happened so long ago, or though we live so long after them, and, with respect to them, in the ends of the world, or in the latter part of the world's duration; in these days that then, and long after that time, used to be called the latter days.

As to what is said that may seem to look as though the apostles soon expected the last coming of Christ,

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* How the time from the first coming of Christ, to the conflagration, is well called the end of the world; see History of the Redemption, page 220, &c.

as particularly in 1 Pet. iv. 7. "The end of all things is at hand;" which is an expression that seems to have as much of such a look, as any in all the apostles writings: yet how did this same apostle explain this propinquity, 2 Pet. iii. 7, 8. "But the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire, against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." And it is to be considered, that the apostle Peter was under no temptation to change his voice in this matter, from any experience of the event's failing as yet. He had not lived long enough as yet, to prove, but that Christ's words, whence any may suppose they might expect Christ's second coming before that generation passed away, and before some that were then present should taste of death, might be fulfilled in that sense.

That there was no such notion prevailing among the disciples or apostles, that Christ should come while most of them lived, is manifest from this, that when the disciples mistook the design of Christ's words, when he said concerning John, John xxi. 22. "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" and from thence, for a while, entertained a notion, that that disciple was not to die till Christ came; it seems to be spoken of, ver. 23, as though they, even while under this mistake, looked upon it as though it was the distinguishing privilege of that disciple, which none of the rest were to expect. And it is evident, that John himself concluded no such thing, as that Christ should come in his lifetime; because he speaks of that notion of the other disciples about him, as ill-founded.

It is a further argument, that, when the apostles used such kind of language, as that "the Lord is at hand," &c. they did not use it in any such sense, as that it should be in that age or the next; that the apostle John, who was accustomed to their language,

and knew how they used it, being one of them, uses it still when he was very old, and all the other apostles were dead; and, even after he had prophesied of many great events, which plainly were to have their accomplishment in many successive ages, in the Revelation.

He uses it in the beginning of the book, when he is about to give an account of his prophetic visions, Rev. iii. 11.; "Behold I come quickly." And he uses it repeatedly at the end of the book, after he had given an account of those future events, in the last chapter, ver. 7. "Behold I come quickly;" ver. 12. "Behold I come quickly;" and ver. 20. "He that testifieth these things, saith, Surely I come quickly." The xvii. chap. of this book alone, is sufficient to convince any one, that John could not suppose that his prophecies could be fulfilled, but in several successive ages.

It is an argument, that such a nearness of Christ's last coming, was not a doctrine that the apostles so much insisted upon, as such an interpretation of these texts supposes; that the church prevailed still, when they saw that there was not such an accomplishment, or saw that Christ did not come. Such a disappointment would have been a dreadful blow to Christianity, if this had been the universal expectation of Christians, and it had been raised by the abundant promises of Christ and his apostles. They probably, upon it, would have exceedingly lost ground, and shrunk away. But the fact was very much the contrary.

What Christ says to his disciples, Luke xvii. 22. is a confirmation that Christ's second coming would be long delayed. "And he said unto the disciples, The days shall come when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it." By the days of the Son of man, is meant the days of Christ's personal appearance in this lower world; perhaps including both his first and second appearing; but with a special reference to his second appearing,

as is manifest from the context; see from the 20th verse to the end, especially ver. 26. It further appears, by what is said in the former part of the next chapter, which is a continuation of the same discourse, and still with reference to the same things, viz. his coming, especially by ver. 1. 7. 8.

Having particularly considered the sayings of the apostles, that have an appearance as though they expected Christ's last coming in their day; I would now consider the sayings of Christ, which have such an aspect; and, to clear this matter, the following things may be observed:

1st, Christ often speaks of his last coming, as that which would be long delayed; Matt. xxv. 5. "While the bridegroom *tarried*, they all slumbered and slept." Luke xx. 9. "A certain man planted a vineyard;" ver. 19. "After a *long time*, the Lord of those servants cometh and reckoneth with them." Matt. xxiv. 48. "My Lord *delayeth* his coming." So Luke xvii. 22.

2^d, It is evident, that when Christ speaks of his coming; of his being revealed; of his coming in his kingdom, or his kingdom's coming; he has respect to his appearing in those great works of his power, Justice and Grace, which should be in the destruction of Jerusalem; and other extraordinary providences which should attend it. So, in Luke xvii. 2. to the end, with chap. xviii. 1.—8. Christ speaks of *the kingdom of God's coming*; of *the coming of the days of the Son of man*; of *the Son of man's being revealed*; and of *the Son of man's coming*. But yet, it is evident he has respect to the destruction of Jerusalem, by chap. xvii. 37.; "And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? and he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together." See also chap. xix. 13; 14; 15. So, when the disciples had been observing the magnificence of the temple, and Christ had said to them, "Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down;" having re-

spect to the destruction of Jerusalem; the disciples asked him when these things should be? and what should be the signs of his coming, and of the end of the world? By Christ's coming, they have plainly a respect to that time of the destruction of the temple, which Christ had spoken of; and therefore, their question is thus expressed by St Mark, chap. xiii. 3, 4. "Tell us when shall these things be, and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?" And in like manner by St Luke, chap. xxi. 7.; and Christ has many things in his answer agreeable to this sense of his question. In his answer, he proceeds to speak of his coming, and of the destruction of Jerusalem, both in one. He warns them to beware of others that should come in his stead, Matt. xxiv. 4, 5. Then he proceeds to tell them what will precede the end, *i. e.* the end of the world, which the disciples inquired after, and tells them what shall be signs of its approach; Matt. xxiv. 6.—16. And then speaks of the desolation of Jerusalem, and of the land, as that end, and that coming of his, which they inquired after; Matt. xxiv. 15.—21. 28.; and more plainly, Luke xxi. 20.—24.

3d, It is manifest, that the event to which Christ sometimes has respect, by his coming, by his coming in his kingdom, by the end of the world, &c. he did not suppose would be at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem. He speaks of that event as attended with the general judgement, and all nations being gathered before his judgement-seat, to receive an eternal sentence, Matt. xxv. latter part; and that this judgement shall be attended with the general resurrection of the dead, John v. 21, 22, 25.—30.; and that after this resurrection, and at the end of this world, the saints shall neither marry nor be given in marriage, but shall be as the angels of God in heaven, Matt. xxii. 30.; especially Luke xx. 34, 35, 36. And that, at this last coming and the end of the world, all the wicked, of all nations, shall be cast into a furnace of fire, into everlasting fire, Matt. xiii.

39,—42.; chap. xxv. 40. 46. And the righteous shall then be as wheat gathered into God's barn; shall enter into the kingdom prepared for them before the foundation of the world; shall be received to Christ, to live with him where he is, in his Father's house in heaven; and shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their father, in the possession of immortal life, Matt. xiii. 30. 39. 43.; chap. xxv. 34. 46.; John xiv. 1,—3.; chap. xvii. 24.

But it is evident, that when Christ spake of the destruction of Jerusalem, he did not expect that these things would be accomplished at that time. For he speaks of that destruction that should be of his enemies, as not of all nations, or the whole wicked world, but as principally confined to Judea; and therefore directs his people that are in Judea, when they shall see signs of its approaching desolation, to flee out of Judea to the mountains; and warns others, in other countries, not to go into it, Luke xxi. 20,—22.; Matt. xxiv. 15,—17.; Mark xiii. 14, 15. He speaks of the great disadvantages they should be under, who should be with child, or give suck; and directs them to pray that their flight may not be in the winter, nor on the Sabbath day, Matt. xxiv. 19, 20.; Mark xiii. 17, 18.; Luke xxi. 23. But, how do those things agree to the time when they should be as the angels of God in heaven? should be received with Christ to heaven, and there shine forth as the sun? He speaks of this destruction, as being by war, by the sword of men, and by the Roman armies, Luke xxi. 23, 24. "There shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people; and they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations." Matt. xxiv. 28. "Wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together." So Luke xvii. 37.; Matt. xxii. 7. "But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth, and sent forth his armies and destroyed those murderers, and burnt up their city." Luke xix. 43, 44. "For the days shall come upon thee, that

that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee, and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another." It is said, Luke xxi. 24. That after the destruction of Jerusalem, the Jews "should be led away captive into all nations, and Jerusalem should be trodden down of the Gentiles." By this it appears, that Christ had no thought that then the world should be destroyed, all mankind disposed in their eternal state, the righteous in heaven, and the wicked all cast into a furnace of fire.

Christ supposes, that the nations should remain after the destruction of Jerusalem, and that the kingdom of God should be taken from them, and given to another nation; Matt. xxi. 41,—43. "They say unto him, he will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons. Therefore, I say unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." Luke xx. 15, 16. "What, therefore, shall the Lord of that vineyard do unto them? He shall come and destroy those husbandmen, and shall give his vineyard to others." And it appears, by the parable of the marriage supper, that the gospel should be preached to the Gentiles, and be gloriously successful among them, after Jerusalem's destruction: Matt. xxii. 7,—10. "But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth, and he sent forth his armies and destroyed those murderers, and burnt up their city. Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they that were bidden were not worthy. Go ye, therefore, into the highways, and, as many as ye find, bid to the marriage. So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together as many as they found, both good and bad, and the wedding was furnished with guests."

From these things, it follows,

4th, That when Christ speaks of his coming, his coming in his kingdom, &c. as being in that generation,

ration, and before some that were then alive should taste of death, there is no need of understanding him of his coming to the last judgement; but he may well be understood of his coming at the destruction of Jerusalem, which, as has been shewn, he calls by these names, and which he also distinguishes from his coming to the last judgement, and the consummation of all things. Yea,

5th, It is evident, that he did not suppose that his coming to the last judgement, and the consummation of all things, would be till a long time after the destruction of Jerusalem. The calling of the Gentiles, instead of the Jews, is spoken of as what should be principally after the destruction of Jerusalem; Matt. xxi. 41. 43.; Luke xx. 15, 16.; Matt. xxii. 7,—10. But this, Christ himself speaks of as a gradual work, in the parables of the grain of mustard seed, and of the leaven hid in three measures of meal; Matt. xiii. 31,—33.; Luke xiii. 19,—21.; Mark iv. 26.—32. And it is very manifest, that Christ did not suppose that he should come to the consummation of all things, till long after the destruction of Jerusalem, by Luke xxi. 24.; where it is said of the Jews, after the destruction of Jerusalem, that they should be led away captive into all nations, and Jerusalem should be trodden down of the Gentiles, till the times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled.

It is considerably manifest, that Christ, in these words, as in some other things he says in the same discourse, has his respect to what is said in the last chapter of Daniel. In the great tribulation he speaks of, Matt. xxiv. 21, 22. he has manifestly in his eye what is said in Dan. xii. 1. And in what he says here of the times of the Gentiles, he has respect to the times spoken of, Dan. xii. 6, 7.; as will appear, by comparing and observing the agreement. But these times are there spoken of as very long.

45. That book which gives us a particular account of the world's being overthrown by a flood of water,
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(which great event is so evident, from so many things in the present state of the earth, and so confirmed by many scraps of history and tradition in the heathen world), and that also gives a very particular account of the preservation of some of mankind through that flood, and of the repeopling of the world since, and of the origin of nations; how the nations of the world were spread abroad; by whom the several quarters of the world were repopled; who the great heads and first founders of nations were; (the truth of which accounts are so abundantly confirmed by what is gathered up of heathen histories, traditions, fables, names, monuments, &c.): That book, that gives a rational and particular account, who made the world, and how it was made, and of the first formation of mankind, (agreeable to reason and the most ancient traditions which were abroad among the nations); and which gives a rational and particular account how mankind came to be so corrupt and miserable as we see they are; and gives us the history of mankind down from the beginning, to the times well within the reach of human histories: The book that describes in prophecy the state of the world of mankind, in its greatest empires, events, and successive revolutions, as Daniel's prophecies of the four monarchies, not only in general events, but many particular events that have a most exact accomplishment, (See Prideaux's application of them, or history): The book that foretold the vast religious revolution that has been brought to pass in the world, in the overthrow of idolatry, and bringing the chief part of the world to the worship of one God: The book that gives an account, and a reason, for that great and universal custom of sacrificing, that had obtained through all ages and all nations, which the world, without this book, was wholly ignorant of; is most likely to give us a right account of the recovery and restoration of mankind to the favour of God, after the commission of sin. It is also most likely to give us a right account of the end of the world; and the account that

that it gives of the end of the world, viz. that it shall perish finally by fire, is exceedingly agreeable to reason. Philosophy would give us great reason to suppose so, if the scriptures had said nothing about it. Philosophy tells us, that the motions of the several parts of the visible world must, in a great length of time, gradually cease; and that, if they cease, the several parts will all run together into a common heap. But, if they do so, the world must necessarily be involved in a great conflagration. For I suppose, that ninety-nine parts in an hundred of the visible world, are the most fierce liquid fire.

46. When the appointed time, that Jesus, the Messiah, the great King, and Priest, and Prophet of Israel, was to come, God, by a remarkable hand of providence, brought to nothing the office of a king, a prophet, and a priest, among the Jews. After the captivity, the Jews, in their civil power, were never wholly independent. For a while, considerable power was in the hands of governors, of the house of David. Afterwards, the kingly power was taken from the house of David, and was assumed by the priests. After this, Herod, who was but half a Jew, ascended the throne. He was not, by his descent, of the stock of Israel, though he was of the Jewish religion, as his father and grandfather had been. Soon after his death, Judea became a Roman province, and was subject to a Roman governor; as it was when Christ died. Soon after this, the Jewish state was destroyed, and all manner of civil power was taken from them.

So, as to the prophetical office: It ceased with the prophet Malachi, or at least with Simon the Just; and never revived otherwise, than either in Christ, or those that were his forerunners or followers.

So, the priestly office: The high-priesthood, which used, according to the law of Moses, to be hereditary, became subject to the disposal, either of the Romans, or the ruling princes. The Jewish church, which, for a great many ages, saw but one high-priest deposed, had

had a new head almost every year. They were deprived of their office: others, who bought it, were put in their room: and even they who kept it longest, had so little power, that they could not suppress the disorders of robbers and zealots. The competitors for the priesthood, at length came to quarrelling, sword in hand. The temple at last was burnt down to the ground, the sacrifices abolished, and the high-priesthood extinct.

So Christ, being the great sacrifice and the substance and end of all their ceremonies, God, by degrees, in his providence, brought those sacrifices and all those ceremonies to nothing: first, by rendering them in a great measure incapable of upholding them, by their dispersion after the Babylonish captivity; and, next, by incapacitating them more and more, by the power of the Heathens over them, especially when they became a Roman province in Christ's time; and lastly, by utterly abolishing all, in the destruction of Jerusalem.

After this, God made it impossible, that ever the civil power of the house of David, or the priesthood of Aaron, or the ceremonial worship, should be restored, by blotting out among them the memory and distinction of their tribes and families, and, in an extraordinary manner, confounding their attempts for rebuilding the temple. The zealots at length broke into the holy place, and drove out all the families from which the high-priests were usually taken, and set up one Phanus, a stupid, ignorant fellow. These zealots, before the destruction of Jerusalem, made the temple a mere slaughter-house, and receptacle of robbers. See Basnage's history of the Jews, book I. chapter iii. iv. v. and vi.; where see the most horrid corruptions and vices of the high-priests, before Jerusalem's destruction.

If Christ therefore be not the Messiah, what becomes of that prophecy and promise, so solemnly made, and so extraordinarily confirmed, in Jer. xxxiii. 14. to the end?

47. One main prejudice against the reality of what the scripture foretells concerning the resurrection, the day of judgment, and the conflagration, is, that it is beside what has been the settled course of things for a great while. But there is no force in this. For the same reason, the people of the old world would not believe that there would be an universal deluge; of which however there are all manner of evidences. If the Greeks and Romans before Christ, had been told of the great revolution effected by the overthrow of their whole religious state, and setting up one so different, they would not have believed it. If any, ten years ago, had foretold such a change in the religious state in New England, as hath lately taken place*; it is so extraordinary, so much beside the settled course of things within the memory of all living, and in many things so diverse from all that was ever heard of, that it would have been perhaps as difficult to believe it, as to believe the great events foretold to accompany the end of the world.

48. That Jesus truly had the power of prophecy, appears by the following facts.

(1.) He foretold his death, and the circumstances of it. This he did very particularly, and at several times; Matt. xvi. 21.; ix. 15.; John x. 11, 15, 17.; xii. 23,—35. Matt. xii. 40., and Luke ix. 31. Matt. xx. 28; xxvi. 2, 12, 18, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29, 36,—46.; with parallel places in the other Evangelists. Luke v. 34.; ix. 22. and 44.; xiii. 1,—9.; xvii. 25.; xx. 13, 14, 15.; with parallel places in Matthew and Mark. The whole of the xiii. xiv. xv. xvi. xvii. chapters of John. The manner of his death is foretold in John iii. 14. 15.; vi. 51,—56.; viii. 28.; xii. 7. and 32. He told his disciples, that he must go unto Jerusalem, and there suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed; Mark x. 33, 34.; Matt. xx. 18, 19. He foretold more particularly, the manner of their proceeding

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* About 1742.

ing against him, *That the chief priests and scribes should condemn him to death; but that they should not put him to death, but deliver him to the Gentiles, to mock and scourge and crucify him*, Luke xxi. 31, 32, 33. He foretold likewise the manner how this should be brought about, Matt. xx. 18. "That he should be betrayed into the hands of men:" and Matt. xvii. 22, 23. "The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men, and they shall kill him." And he did particularly point out, beforehand, the man that was to betray him; Matt. xxvi. 23, 25; John vi. 70.; xiii. 18,—33. He foretold that his disciples should forsake him; Matt. xxvi. 31.; John xvi. 32. "All of you shall be offended because of me this night; for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered." Christ, long beforehand, foretold the time when, and place where, he should suffer and die; Luke xiii. 32, 33. And when Peter declared his confident resolution to adhere to him, he foretold that he should deny him, with very particular circumstances of the time and manner of it; Matt. xxvi. 34, 35.; Mark xiv. 29, 30, 31.; John xiii. 38.

(2.) He punctually foretold his resurrection, with the circumstances of it. That he should rise again the third day, Matt. xvi. 21.; xvii. 23.; Luke ix. 22.; xviii. 33. That if they destroyed that temple, in three days he would build it up again; John ii. 19. "That as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth;" Matt. xii. 40.: See also Matt. xvii. 9.; and Mark ix. 9, 10. That he should lay down his life, and take it again; John x. 17, 18.; and told his disciples, that after he was risen, he would go before them into Galilee; Matt. xxvi. 32.; which was accomplished, Matt. xxviii. 16. So Christ often foretold his ascension, John vi. 62.; vii. 33, 34.; viii. 21, 22, 23.; xiv. 1,—4, 28.; xvi. 5, 6, 7, 28.; xvii. 5, 11.

(3.) He foretold the descent of the Holy Ghost on the apostles in miraculous powers and gifts, Luke xxiv.

xxiv. 49. ; " Behold I send the promise of my Father upon you. But tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endowed with power from on high." He specified the place where the Holy Ghost should descend, and what the effects of this descent of the Holy Ghost upon them should be. He told them particularly, Mark xvi. 17, 18. " And these signs shall follow them that believe : In my name shall they cast out devils, and they shall speak with new tongues. They shall take up serpents ; and if they shall drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them : they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." All which was punctually fulfilled, as appears by the second chapter of Acts, and the following part of that history.

(4.) He foretold the destruction of Jerusalem, before the end of that age, with the signs foregoing it, and the concomitant circumstances of it. Concerning this, three things may be observed :

First, Our Saviour's general prediction of the siege of Jerusalem, and of the total destruction of the city. This our Saviour foretells, Luke xix. 14. with 27. ; *ibid.* ver. 41,—44. " And when he was near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace, &c.—For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and shall compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee, and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another," &c. So Josephus tells us, Book vi. That Titus raised a wall round about Jerusalem, and kept them in on every side, so that none could come out, though many thousands were famished. . Matt. xxiii. 38. Christ says to Jerusalem, " Behold your house is left desolate." And the two preceding verses represent the destruction as exceedingly terrible. See also Luke xiii. 32. to the end ; Luke xvii. 25. to the end. In the last verse, it is implied, that the destruction should

be by the Romans; as also, Matt. xxiv. 28. And at the beginning of Luke xxiv. when the disciples were shewing him the beautiful structure of the temple, he foretells that there should not one stone be left upon another, which should not be thrown down. See also how Christ prophesies of the destruction of Jerusalem, and the greatness of it; Matt. xxi. 33,—45., and xxii. 6, 7.; Luke xx. 9,—19. So Josephus tells us, Book vii. of the *Jewish war*, That when the Romans had taken the city, Cæsar gave orders to lay it waste to the ground, excepting some part of the wall which was left for the guards of soldiers, and three of the strongest towers, which he ordered to be left for a standing monument of the Roman courage. But all the rest of the city was so levelled, that no man that should come to see it, could believe that it ever was inhabited. And the Roman history tells us, That Turnus Rufus, with a ploughshare, did tear up the foundation of the temple, and left no part of it, not so much as under ground, undissolved.

Secondly, We may consider our Saviour's prediction of the signs which should forerun the destruction of Jerusalem, viz. these eight.

1st, He foretells that there should be false and counterfeit Christs or Messiahs, Matt. xxiv. 4, 5. "Take heed that no man deceive you; for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many." This our Saviour gives as one of the first signs; and therefore St Luke adds, chap. xxi. 8. "The time draweth near." And it accordingly happened. Josephus mentions several of these, of whom though he does not expressly say that they called themselves the Messias, yet he says that which is equivalent, that they undertook to rescue the people from the Roman yoke, which was the thing which the Jews expected that the Messias should do for them: and therefore, we find, Luke xxiv. 21. that the disciples that were going to Emmaus, say, "We hoped that this had been he which should have redeemed Israel:" that being, it seems, a common periphrasis

phrasis for the Messias. Such an one Theudas pretend-
 ed himself to be: not that Theudas, of whom Gamaliel
 speaks, Acts v. 36.; but another of the same name;
 who, about twelve years after our Saviour's death,
 when Cuspius Fadus was procurator of Judea, rose,
 and seduced the people; of whom Josephus gives this
 account, Book xviii. That being a forcerer, he rose
 up, and deceived many. This man persuaded many
 to bring their goods, and follow him down to the
 river Jordan, which he promised, by his command,
 to divide; and to give them a safe passage over it.
 But while he was thus playing the fool among the
 people, Fadus sent some forces, and surprised him
 and his company, killing many of them, and cutting
 off his head; and so there was an end of him. Such
 likewise were those impostors, who, about 22 years
 after our Saviour's death, were so rise among them,
 when Felix was governor of Judea, of whom Jose-
 phus tells us, that they drew multitudes after them
 into the wilderness, promising to work great signs
 and wonders before them. See Matt. xxiv. 26. "If
 they shall say unto you, he is in the desert, go not
 forth." Such an one likewise was the Egyptian pro-
 phet, who, as Josephus tells us, came to Jerusalem,
 much about the same time, and persuaded them to
 follow him to Mount Olivet, persuading them, that
 from thence they should see the walls of Jerusalem
 fall, and so might enter the city; which Felix un-
 derstanding, sent soldiers, and slew, and took se-
 veral of them. But the Egyptian impostor himself
 made his escape; which is the reason of that saying
 of the chief captain to Paul, Acts xxi. 38. "Art
 not thou the Egyptian, which, before these days,
 made an uproar," &c. Such another was that im-
 postor, (if he be distinct from the former), who, as
 Josephus tells us, about three years after, under
 Porcius Festus, the procurator, deceived the people
 with vain promises of deliverance, and ease from their
 oppressions, if they would follow him into the wilder-
 ness; but Festus sent soldiers and destroyed him and

his company. Thus were those words of Christ fulfilled, John v. 43. "I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not. If another shall come in his own name, him will ye receive."

2d, The next sign given by our Saviour, is, wars and rumours of wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes, &c. Matt. xxiv. ver. 6, 7. About this time, the Jews began to be set upon in several places, by the command of the emperor, and many thousands of them were slain at Alexandria and Babylon, as Josephus tells us; and there was a fear and rumour of a general war denounced against them by Caius Caligula the emperor, unless they would admit his statue into the temple. Upon this rumour, the whole nation was in a great astonishment, inasmuch, that the Jews left their business, and neglected to till their grounds, expecting that the Romans would have fallen upon them; of which consternation, both Josephus and Philo give us a particular account. Our Saviour adds, "See that ye be not troubled, for these things must come to pass; but the end is not yet." That is, when ye see the nation in this danger from the Romans, be not ye troubled, as the Jews will be, thinking now will be the ruin of the nation. This and other things will happen, before the final end come. And accordingly it fell out: for so Josephus and Tacitus tell us, that this storm was blown over, by the sudden death of the emperor. Ver. 7th, "Nation shall rise up against nation;" which happened under Claudius and Nero, the two next Roman emperors, when, in several cities, as Cæsarea and Ptolemais, and many others, the Jews, and those other nations that inhabited those cities, fell upon and destroyed one another, as may be read at large in Josephus. "And kingdom against kingdom:" this seems to refer to the several provinces or tetrarchies in Palestine, which were also called kingdoms, which at this time had cruel wars against one another; as the Jews and Galileans against the Samaritans; and several others that Josephus speaks of. "And there shall

shall be famines and pestilences:" accordingly, Josephus tells us, that, under Claudius Cæsar, there was a great famine in Judea, viz. that which was prophesied of by Agabus, Acts xi. 28. And this, Grotius very probably supposeth to be the reason, why St Paul, in his epistles written about that time, is so earnest with the Christians to send relief to the saints that were in Judea. "Pestilences:" they usually follow famine. "And earthquakes in divers places;" which happened in the times of Claudius and Nero. Philostratus speaks of a great earthquake which happened in Crete, in the time of Claudius, and in several other places, as Chios, Smyrna, Samos, &c. not long before the destruction of Jerusalem. Tacitus speaks of one in Asia about the same time.

3d, Fearful sights and signs from heaven. So St Luke, chap. xxi. 11. "There shall be fearful sights and signs from heaven." Josephus gives us a clear comment upon this, *Jewish war*, book vii. Says he, "This wretched people believed impostors and counterfeits; but those great signs and prodigies which did forerun their desolation, they neither minded nor believed." A little before their destruction, he tells us, there hung over the city a fiery sword, which continued for a year together. A little before their rebellion against the Romans, there appeared a comet, which shined so clear in the temple, and about the altar, as if it had been day. And the same day, an heifer that was led to be sacrificed, brought forth a lamb in the middle of the temple. The eastern gate of the temple, which was of massy brass, and very heavy, and could scarce be shut by twenty men, and was constantly made fast with strong locks and bars, flew open at midnight, which, when it was told to the magistrate, and he came to see it, they could scarce get strength enough to shut it. One evening, not long before their destruction, there were seen in the air, chariots and armies hovering over the city. At the feast of Pentecost, the priests going one night into the temple, according to their custom,

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first heard a noise, and afterwards a sudden voice, saying, *Let us go hence.* And, which is very terrible, one Jesus, a plain country man, four years before any troubles began, when the city was in a deep peace, came up to Jerusalem, and, upon one of their festivals, began to cry out with loud voice, *A voice from the east; a voice from the west; a voice from the four winds; a voice against Jerusalem and the temple; a voice against bridegrooms and brides; a voice against the people;* and thus he went about crying, day and night. And being seized on by the magistrate, and punished and tortured, he would not give over, but still went crying about, *Wo, wo to Jerusalem;* and thus he continued for seven years and five months together, and was neither weary nor hoarse, till the city was besieged, and then he was quiet. But one time he went up upon the walls, and cried with a loud voice, *Wo, wo to the city, and the temple, and the people;* and added, *Wo also to myself:* and immediately was struck dead by a stone out of a cross-bow. These things are all related by one of the most prudent historians, who lived at that very time, and that very place: and he says, that many were alive when he wrote, and could attest all this. Ver. 8. "All these things are the beginning of sorrows." The scripture usually compares the greatest sufferings and afflictions to the pains of a woman in travail, to which our Saviour here alludes. These were but the first pangs; nothing to those throws that should come at last.

4th, Another sign which our Saviour foretold as a forerunner of the destruction of Jerusalem, was the persecution of the Christians. "They shall deliver you to be afflicted, and shall kill you." St Mark expresseth it more particularly, Mark xiii. 9. "But take heed to yourselves; for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues, ye shall be beaten, and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings, for my name's sake, for a testimony against them." And these did partly happen before the fore-mentioned

mentioned calamities. For we find the fathers, in their apologies, every where complaining, that the Jews and heathens laid the blame of all the calamities and judgements which befel them, as famines, pestilences, and earthquakes, upon the Christians, as the causes of them; and from this pretence they many times took occasion to persecute them. "They shall deliver you to be afflicted." This was fulfilled in delivering some of the apostles to be whipped and imprisoned by the chief priests and rulers, as Peter and John; or giving them up to the Roman power, as they did James and Peter to Herod; Paul to Gallio, Felix and Festus, and last of all to Nero. "And shall kill you." Thus, Stephen was killed by a popular tumult; and the two James's were put to death, under colour of a judicial process; the one stoned by the council of the Jews, and the other put to death by Herod. "And ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake;" which was exactly fulfilled.

5th, Christ foretells, that, in this persecution, *many should be offended, i. e.* fall off from Christianity, as we read of many in the epistles of the apostles. "And they shall betray one another, and hate one another;" which was remarkably fulfilled in the sect of the Gnostics, who did not only decline persecution themselves, but joined with those that persecuted the Christians, as ecclesiastical history tells us.

6th, That likewise, upon this occasion of persecution, many false prophets should arise, and deceive many, ver. 11.; which seems to refer to Simon Magus, and the other heads of the Gnostic sect. Ver. 12. "And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold;" which seems likewise to refer to the Gnostics, of whom St John, in his first epistle, doth frequently make mention, referring to their name; as "he that saith, I *know* him, and keepeth not his commandment," &c. of whom he doth so much complain of their want of love to the brethren.

7th, That there should be an universal publication of the gospel, through the Roman empire, before the great desolation should happen, ver. 14. which was accomplished by the preaching of the apostles, especially the apostle Paul. Ver. 14. "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations;" that is, that they might be convinced of the unreasonable obstinacy of the Jews, before God brought those dreadful calamities upon that nation. "And then shall the end come;" that is, the final destruction of the Jews, the total desolation of the Jewish church and commonwealth, according to the prophecy of Jacob, Gen. xlix. 10. which puts these two signs together. That the "sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet, until Shiloh come: and unto him shall the gathering of the people be."

8th, The last, and most immediate sign and fore-runner which he gave of their destruction, is the standing of the abomination of desolation in the holy place; ver. 15. "When ye shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place, then let them which be in Judea flee to the mountains;" which in Luke xxi. 20, 21. is expressed thus: "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judea, flee unto the mountains." It is the Roman armies, therefore, compassing Jerusalem, that is called the abomination of desolation, standing in the holy place; because Jerusalem was the holy city, and so many furlongs about it were called holy. Now, when the Roman army should appear within the limits of the holy ground, then the abomination of desolation might be said to stand in the holy place. But the word "abomination," seems particularly to refer to the Roman ensigns, upon which were the images of their emperors, which the Romans worshipped, as Suetonius expressly tells us; and Tacitus calls them *Bellorum Dii*, their Gods of war. Now

it was an abomination to the Jews to see these idols set up within the limits of the holy city. To which I may add, what Josephus tells us afterwards, that the Romans, after they had conquered the city, set up those ensigns in the ruins of the temple, and sacrificed to them. "Then let them which are in Judea, flee to the mountains;" which refers to the time when Jerusalem was first compassed by the Roman army under Cestius Gallus, who afterwards withdrew his siege: and at this time Josephus doth say, that many did flee, foreseeing the approaching danger.

Having thus treated of the forerunners of the destruction of Jerusalem, which Christ foretold, I proceed,

Thirdly, To consider the concomitant and subsequent circumstances of it.

1st, The unparalleled greatness of their calamity and destruction, ver. 19. "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world to this time, neither ever shall be." This is a very material circumstance of this prophecy. There could appear no probability that things would come to that extremity; for, it was not the design of the Roman government to destroy any of those provinces which were under them. But that such a calamity should have happened to them under Titus, who was the mildest, and farthest from severity of all mankind, nothing was more unlikely. And that any people should conspire to their own ruin, and to blindly and obstinately run themselves into such calamities as made them the pity of their enemies, was the most incredible thing. St Luke expresseth the dismal calamity that should happen to them, in other words; Luke xxi. 22, 23. "For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But wo unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days; for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon the people." And to this Josephus fully gives testimony,

mony, as will appear, both by what he says in general concerning their calamity, and by the particular account of their miseries and sufferings.

In general, he tells us, that never was any age so fruitful of misery as this was; and, almost in our Saviour's words, in his preface to his books of the siege of Jerusalem, he says, "That all the calamities that had fallen upon any nation, from the beginning of the world, were but small in comparison of what happened to the nation of the Jews in that age." And in his sixth book, he says, that "as there was never any nation so wicked, so, never any nation suffered such calamitous accidents." But this will appear, by a brief and particular enumeration of their calamities. Not to mention the burning and destroying of several of their chief cities, as Zabulon, Gadara, Japha, Jatapatah, Joppa, and several others, I shall insist chiefly on the sufferings of the people themselves, by their tumults and seditions against the Romans. Before the coming of Vespasian, there were slain at Jerusalem and in Syria, 2000; at Ascalon, 2500; at Ptolemæis, 2000; at Alexandria, 50,000; at Joppa, 8400; at Mount Asamon, 2000; at Damascus, 10,000; and afterward at Ascalon, by Antonius a Roman commander, 18,000; in all, almost 100,000. By Vespasian, in Galilee and other parts, very great numbers; at Japha, 15,000; at Mount Gerizim, 11,600; at Jatapatah, (the city, of which Josephus our historian was governor), 40,000; at Joppa, 4000; at Tarrichea, nearly 8000; at Gama-la, 9000; at Giscala, 2000; in all, fourscore and ten thousand. Afterwards, by their own seditions at Jerusalem, 8500, at several times; and afterwards, by the faction of the zealots, 12,000 of the chiefest and noblest citizens were slain at one time; at the river Jordan by Placidus, 13,000, besides many thousands drowned: so that the river was filled up almost with dead carcases. At two towns in Idumea, by Vespasian, 10,000; at Gerasa, 1000; in all, 45,000. While Vespasian was thus wasting the cities of Judea,

dea, the faction of the zealots filled all places at Jerusalem, even the temple itself, with continual slaughters. And after they had conquered Ananus, who stood for the people against the zealots, and got all into their own hands, they were divided into parties, and made slaughter of one another; and one party let in Simon, who headed a seditious multitude which he brought out of the country. And after that, they were subdivided into three parties, John's, and Eleazer's, and Simon's, which held several parts of the city, and day and night continued to destroy one another. In which seditions, all their granaries of corn, and magazines of arms, were burnt; so that, though provision had been laid up in the city, that would have sufficed for several years, yet, before they came to be besieged by Titus, they were almost reduced to famine. And, after they were besieged, at the first they united a little against the Romans; yet, after a few days, they divided again into factions, and more of them were slain by one another's hands, and with more cruelty, than by the Romans: insomuch, that Titus, the general of the Romans, wept several times, to consider the misery they brought upon themselves; and their very enemies were more pitiful to them, than they were to one another. After two months siege, the famine began to rage within; and then all manner of cruelties were exercised by the soldiers upon that miserable people; and, at last, they were brought to such necessity, that many endeavoured to flee out to the enemy, and yet were not permitted; but, as many as were suspected of any endeavour to escape, were cruelly killed. It is not to be imagined what barbarous inhumanities, in these straits, all exercised towards one another, snatching the meat out of one another's mouths, and from their dearest friends and their very children. And so obstinate were they, that neither those calamities that they suffered, nor the severity of the Romans, in crucifying many thousands of them before the walls, and threatening them

all with the same death, in case they would not yield; in ripping open the bowels of two thousand of them in a night, who fled out of Jerusalem, upon a report that they had swallowed gold (as many of them had); nor all the kind messages of Titus, offering them peace, and using all manner of intreaties and persuasions not to run upon their own ruin, could prevail with them to accept of a peace. And thus they continued, till, by famine and force, the city was taken: and then their provocation of the Romans, to cruelty towards those they got into their power, was so great, that Titus was not able to withhold the soldiers from exercising great cruelties towards them. In short, from the beginning of the siege, till the taking of the city, there were famished, and slain by the factions among themselves, and by the Romans, 1,000,000; the greatest number, and with the saddest circumstances, that is to be read in history.

And, after this, the temple was burnt and made desolate, the whole city was destroyed, and all their whole land was seized by the Roman Emperor; and the remnant of the people, in other parts of the nation, were persecuted with great severity. Great numbers of the Jews were destroyed at the taking of the castle of Herodion, and Machænes, and Massada, and in the thickets or woods of Jandes. And there were great slaughters of the Jews in other parts, at Antioch, in all places about Alexandria and Thebes, and at Cyrene; so that it was visible that there was wrath upon this people.

2d, Another circumstance that was to follow the destruction of Jerusalem, was, the arising of false Christs and false prophets, ver. 23, 24. "And then, if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or lo, there, believe him not; for false Christs and false prophets shall arise, and shall shew signs and wonders." Such was Jonathan, who, presently after the destruction of Jerusalem, as Josephus tells us, drew many into the wilderness of Cyrene, pretending that he would shew signs and wonders to them. There-fore

fore our Saviour adds, "Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore, if they say unto you, Behold he is in the desert, go not forth." There appeared in Egypt, Crete, and Cyprus, several other impostors, who gave out themselves to be Christs; and false prophets, who applied the prophecies of the Old Testament to these counterfeit mystics; as they did that of Balaam, concerning a star coming out of Jacob to Barchschebas, because his name signified the son of a star: and this was a notorious impostor in the time of Adrian the Emperor, not many years after the destruction of Jerusalem, about twenty, as I remember Eusebius counts. He had a great number followed him, which put to death many Christians, because they would not renounce Christ, and join with them against the Romans; and that was the cause of the death of some hundreds of thousands of them.

3^d, Another subsequent circumstance was, the Jews being led into captivity, and dispersed into all nations. This St Luke adds, Luke xxi. 29. "They shall be led away captive into all nations." I need not prove this out of history; we see the effect of it to this day.

4th, "That Jerusalem should be trodden down of the Gentiles, till the times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled." [Referring to the times of the Gentiles, mentioned in the xii. of Daniel, and other parts of that prophecy, called "Time, times, and half a time;" which, as appears by some parts of Daniel xii., particularly verses 6, 7, 8. was to be a very long time, as has accordingly happened].

REFLECTIONS on the foregoing Prophecies of Christ, and their exact fulfillment.

1. The predictions, though very improbable, new, and very extraordinary, yet were fulfilled in a very remarkable manner. Such were the unusual signs forerunning the destruction of Jerusalem: such was

the universal publication of the gospel all over the Roman Empire : such were likewise the circumstances of the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, as that it should be an utter desolation, which was strangely accomplished, when, as Josephus tells us, the very mountain upon which the temple stood, was almost consumed by the fierceness of the fire. [By which, it seems, that there was a miraculous fierceness in the flames. The effect was very miraculous, as it became a resemblance, in the vehemence of the heat, and in such an effect, of the last conflagration]. And the Roman history gives an account of the plucking up of the very foundations of the temple, by Turnus Rufus. But the most remarkable circumstance of all, was, the strange and unexampled calamities which should attend this destruction ; such as never befel any people before : and accordingly, no history makes mention of so vast a number of men, that, in so short a time, did perish in such sad circumstances : fourteen or fifteen hundred thousand within less than a year's space ; and more of these, by far, cruelly murdered by one another, than by the Romans, with the utmost extremity of misery, by intestine seditions, and most extreme famine. And if the days had not been shortened, as our Saviour says, no flesh could have been saved. If things had gone on at this rate a little longer, no one of the Jewish nation would have been left alive. [But for the sake of their posterity that were the elect Jews, that are to be called in the last ages of the world, these days were shortened. These elect were in the loins of those Jews that were saved]. It was exceedingly unlikely, that such a calamity should happen to the Jews under Titus, who was the mildest, and farthest from cruelty, of all the Roman Emperors : and it was a strange thing, that a people should be so besotted, as so madly to conspire together to their own ruin, and so blindly and obstinately run themselves into such calamities, as to make them to be the pity of their very enemies.

II: The providence of God hath so ordered it; as to preserve to us a more punctual and credible history of this destruction of Jerusalem, than there is of any other matter whatsoever, so long since done. And it is worthy to be noted, that this matter is related, not by a Christian, (who might have been suspected of partiality, and a design to have paralleled the event with our Saviour's prediction), but by a Jew, both by nation and religion, who seems designedly to have avoided, as much as possibly he could, the very mention of the Christian name, and all particulars relating to our Saviour, though no historian was ever more punctual in all other things. And he, from whom we have a relation of these things, was an eye-witness of all those sad calamities that befel that nation of the Jews; and, during the war in Galilee against Vespasian, was one of their chief commanders; and, being taken by the Romans, was in their camp all the time of the siege of Jerusalem. And as he was able to give us the truest account of those matters, being an eye-witness, so he hath always had the repute of a most faithful historian. Joseph Scaliger, who was a very good judge in these matters, gives this character of him, that he was *diligentissimus* (και φιλαλεγεστος) *omnium scriptorum*, the most diligent historian, and the greatest lover of truth, of any that he had ever read; "of whom, (says he), I confidently affirm, that not only in the Jewish affairs, but in all foreign matters, one may more safely rely upon his credit, than upon all the Greek and Latin historians put together." And furthermore, there is no ancient history extant, that relates any matter with so much particularity of circumstances, as Josephus does this of the Jewish wars, especially the siege and destruction of Jerusalem.

And, that the providence of God may appear more remarkable in this history, which is the only punctual one that hath been preserved down to us, of this great action; it will be worth our observation, how remarkably this person was preserved for the writing

of this history. When Vespasian made war upon Galilee, Josephus was chief commander there, and was besieged there by Vespasian, in the city Jotapatah, which, after a long and stout resistance, being taken by the Romans, he, with forty more, hid themselves in a cave, where at last they were discovered by the Romans; which, Vespasian hearing of, sent and offered them life; and Josephus would have accepted of his offer, but the rest would not permit him to yield himself, but threatened to kill him: and when, by no persuasions, he could take them off from their obstinate resolution, he was glad to propound this to them, that they should cast lots, by two and two, who should die first; and he that had the second lot, should kill the first, and the next him, and so on; and the last should kill himself. The providence of God preserved Josephus and another, to the last lot; and when all the rest were killed, Josephus persuaded him to yield himself up to the Romans; and so they two escaped with their lives; by which remarkable providence, he was preserved to write this history.

III. It seems very plain, from this relation which Josephus gives, that the Jewish nation was remarkably devoted by God to destruction, and most fatally hardened and blinded, to their own ruin. This, Josephus every where takes notice of, that there was a sad and black fate hung over the nation, and God seemed to have determined their ruin. And after the destruction of Jerusalem, when the castle of Masfada was besieged by the Romans, Eleazer the governor, in his speech to the soldiers, reckons up the sad symptoms of God's displeasure against them, and tells them, that, from the beginning of the war, it was easy for any one to conjecture, that God, in his great wrath, had devoted the nation, which he formerly loved, to destruction.

Indeed, all along, the hand of God was very visible against them. For when, in the beginning of their rebellion, Cestius Gallus, the Roman commander,

er, had an opportunity to have taken Jerusalem; and to have put an end to the war, Josephus tells us, that God being angry with them, would not permit it, but did reserve them for a greater and sadder destruction. [N. B. Cestius Gallus, when he compassed Jerusalem with armies, and thereby gave Christians in the city, the signs of its approaching destruction that Christ had foretold, was, as appears by this passage, caused, by a strange and unaccountable hand of God, to raise the siege, when he had a fair opportunity to have taken the city, to give opportunity to the Christians to flee to the mountains, agreeably to Christ's direction]. And afterward, when Vespasian renewed the war against them, Josephus tells us, that he used all kinds of earnest persuasion with his countrymen, to prevent their ruin, by submitting to the Roman government. But they were obstinate, and would not hearken to any moderate counsels. And when the sedition of the zealots began in Jerusalem, Josephus takes notice, that all the wisest men amongst them, and those who were most likely, by their interest and moderation, to have saved the city, were first of all cut off by the zealots, so that there were none left to persuade the people to moderate measures. They provoked the Romans against them all manner of ways. Their seditions among themselves continued, when the enemy was before their walls: and when, in all probability, they might have held out so long, as to have wearied the Romans; by their own seditions, they burnt all their granaries and provisions of corn, and magazines of arms, as if they had consulted the advantage of the Romans against themselves. And, which was very remarkable, Josephus tells us, that before the siege, the fountain of Siloam was almost dried up, and all the springs about Jerusalem, so that water bore a great price. But as soon as Titus came before Jerusalem, the springs broke out again, and there never was greater plenty of water. If this had not happened, the Roman armies could very hardly have subsisted. After the temple

temple was destroyed, when Titus would have given John and Simon, and the rest of the zealots, their lives, they would not submit, but were all destroyed by their own obstinacy. At Massada, rather than yield to the Romans, 900 men, women, and children, killed one another. So that when the Romans entered the castle, they found them all dead, excepting one woman and a child, that had hid themselves.

Philostratus tells us, that when some of the nearer nations would have crowned Titus for his victories over the Jews, he refused it, saying, that he deserved nothing on that account, for it was not his work; but God had made him the instrument of his wrath against that people. So that there were never greater acknowledgments of a divine hand against any people, than at this time against the Jews. Never was there greater courage and contempt of death in any people: and yet they were conquered by numbers much inferior to them. Never was any soldier so merciful as Titus was, and so solicitous to have spared the effusion of blood, and yet he was necessitated, against his nature, to exercise great cruelties towards them. Many times he endeavoured, by the most severe inhibitions, to restrain the cruelties of the soldiers towards them: and when he found that they ripped open the bowels of the Jews that fled out of Jerusalem, in hopes of finding gold which they had swallowed, he would have put all to death that were engaged in that cruelty, but that he found them so many: and notwithstanding this, when he forbade the like cruelty to be exercised for the future, under the most severe penalties, yet Josephus says, that the soldiers did not forbear privately to do it: and though, in other cases, such a severe prohibition would have taken place, yet says he, because God had devoted that people to ruin, all the ways which Titus used for the saving of them, turned to their destruction. Nay, there was as much blood shed among themselves, by the dissensions between those that desired peace with the Romans, and those that would not hearken to it,

as by the Romans. I may here add from Dr Dodrige on Rev. vi. 4. "That under Trajan and Hadrian, A. D. 100 to 138, the Jews had a thousand cities and fortresses taken and destroyed, and 580,000 men slain."

iv. It must needs be for some very great sin, that God sent those dreadful calamities upon that nation. Josephus says, that it was surely for some greater impiety than that nation were guilty of, when they were carried away captive to Babylon. Nay, he says, that the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah were but small in comparison with those the Jews were guilty of; so that he says they were so ripe for destruction, that if the Roman army had not come when it did, he did verily believe, that either an earthquake would have swallowed up the city, or a deluge overflowed them, or fire from heaven have consumed them; which is very much the same with that the apostle says of them, 1 Thess. ii. 16. "That they were filling up the measure of their sins, that wrath might come upon them to the uttermost."

v. The punishment that was inflicted on them, hath very shrewd marks and signatures upon it; from which, it is easy to conjecture, for what sin they were thus punished. Titus laid his siege to Jerusalem at the very same time and season that the Jews crucified Christ, viz. at the time of the Passover; and the very day that he began his siege, he crucified one before their walls; and afterwards, almost the only cruelty that the Romans exercised towards them by the command and permission of Titus, was crucifixion; in-somuch, that sometimes five hundred were crucified in a day, till they wanted wood for crosses; so that they, who earnestly cried out against our Saviour, Crucify, crucify, had at last enough of it. God made them eat of the fruit of their own ways, and filled them with their own devices: and they who bought Christ for thirty pieces of silver, were afterwards themselves sold at a lower rate.

VI. Their religion was remarkably struck at and affronted, as if God intended to put an end to that dispensation, and to abrogate their law. Most of their great calamities happened to them on the Sabbath-day, and upon their great festivals. Cestius Gallus sat down with his army before Jerusalem on the Sabbath. Titus besieged them at the time of the Passover: and Jerusalem was taken (as Dio in his Roman history observes) upon the Sabbath-day, that day for which the Jews have so great a veneration. The zealots profaned the temple, by making it a garrison, and by the rapine and bloodshed committed in it. They brought the priesthood into contempt, by choosing the meanest of the people into the highest offices. They turned the materials of the temple into instruments of war. The Romans themselves were as much grieved to see how the Jews profaned the temple, as the Jews themselves ought to have been, if it had been so profaned by the Romans. These are the very words of Josephus. And though Titus gave express orders, and used great endeavours to save the temple, and hazarded himself to quench it when it was on fire, yet he could not do it; but it was burnt to the ground. Afterwards, when the priests came to him, and supplicated him for their lives, contrary to his usual clemency, he commanded them to be slain, saying, they came too late, and it was fit they should perish with the temple; and, now that that was destroyed, for the sake of which they should have been saved, he saw no reason to spare them. Afterwards, the Roman ensigns were set up upon the ruins of the temple, and the soldiers sacrificed to them; and their law was carried in triumph at Rome, before Vespasian and Titus. I will add but one circumstance more, to shew, that that dispensation was at an end. God seemed to have wholly given over his particular care of that people, and to have no longer regard to the covenant made with them, in which he had promised, that when they came up three times a year, from all parts of the land, to serve the

the Lord, he would so order things by his providence, that the enemy should make no advantage of their absence from their borders; nay, the enemy should not then desire their land; and yet, notwithstanding this, at the time of the Passover, when the whole nation were met at Jerusalem, Titus came upon them, and inclosed them all in the city. Upon the whole, if so particular a prediction as this of our Saviour's concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, with so many circumstances, so contingent and improbable, so punctually answered by the event, be not an argument of divine inspiration, then there can be no evidence of any such thing as a spirit of prophecy. Suppose the Jews say true, that Jesus Christ was an impostor, and consequently, justly put to death by them, what greater reflection upon the providence of God can be imagined, than that this person should be permitted to foretell, that such and such calamities should befall them that had put him to death, as a punishment upon them for that sin: and afterwards, all this should happen in so remarkable a manner, as the world cannot give the like instance? Is it in the least credible, that the divine Providence should permit such things, as of necessity would give credit to an impostor, and would be good evidence to a prudent, considerate mind, that he was divinely inspired?

(5.) We come now to the last instance of our Saviour's prophetic spirit, viz. in those predictions which foretell the fate of the gospel in the world.

First, What discouragements and difficulties the first publishers of the gospel should meet with. Our Saviour foretells two great discouragements:

1st, From the persecutions which the powers of the world should stir up against them. Of this our Saviour gave his disciples early notice, when he first called them together, and sent them forth; Matt. x. 16, 17, 18. "Behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves. Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. But beware of men, for

for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues, and ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake:" and, ver. 21, 22. (see also Luke x. 3.) "And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child; and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death; and ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake." And elsewhere he says, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth," &c. Matt. x. 34. And a little before his death, he tells his disciples, Matt. xxiv. 9. "Then they shall deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you, and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake:" and, Luke xxi. 12. "But before all these things, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake." And many other things there are that Christ said to the like purpose, as Matt. x. 24,—39; Luke xii. 3,—12; Mark viii. 31, to the end; Matt. xvi. 21, to the end; Luke xii. 49,—53.; xiv. 26, to the end; ix. 22,—26.; xvii. 33.; John xii. 24,—26.; xv. 18,—21.; xvi. 1,—4., which prophecy is exceedingly full and plain, and ver. 20,—22, 33; xvii. 14,—16.; Matt. v. 10, 11, 12.; Luke vi. 20,—23.; Matt. viii. 20.; Luke ix. 58.; xi. 49,—51.; Matt. xx. 22, 23.; John xii. 25; Matt. xxiii. 34.; Luke xiv. 25,—33. Many particulars, with many circumstances, are implied in Matt. xxii. 1,—10.

Particularly, he foretold the two sons of Zebedee, James and John, that they should be put to death; Matt. xx. 23. "Ye shall indeed drink of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with." We have an account of the fulfilment of this with respect to James, in Acts xii. 2. And ecclesiastical history gives us an account of the same, concerning John; though he remained till after the destruction of Jerusalem, which Christ might have
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some respect to in Joh. xxi. 22.; where he says, "What if I will that he tarry till I come?"

He likewise foretold Peter what kind of death he should die; viz. that when he was old he should be crucified; Joh. xiii. 36.; 2 Pet. i. 14.; Joh. xxi. 18, 19. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, when thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldst; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldst not." And the evangelist adds, "This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God." And accordingly, he was crucified about forty years after; as Eusebius, and several of the fathers, tell us.

2d, Another great discouragement which our Saviour foretold they should meet with, was, the rising of false Christs, and false prophets: as, Matt. xxiv. 5, 24.; vii. 15. But of these I have spoken already.

Secondly, Christ likewise foretold what assistance the apostles should have in carrying on their work. He told them he would be with them in it. He told them that they should receive power, by a spirit that should come upon them, whereby they should be qualified to be witnesses unto him, in Judea, and Jerusalem, and Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth; Luke xxiv. 49.; Acts i. 8. See also Joh. vii. 38, 39.; Joh. xiv. 16, &c. 26.; Joh. xv. 26.; xvi. 7,—14. Now, it is most evident, that they were endowed with some extraordinary spirit, and uncommon influence, by which they were furnished with power, strength, courage, activity, comfort, and eloquence, and answered those purposes that Christ spake of, in an extraordinary manner. Nothing is more evident, than that they were, in a new and extraordinary manner, endowed with a spirit or influence that carried them quite above themselves, and made them quite new men as to gifts of knowledge, courage, eloquence, zeal and activity, steadfastness and resolution, and other things to qualify them for that work, of being

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witnesses for Christ, or preaching Christ in such a manner as to tend to success. Christ foretold, that by this spirit that he promised, they should be raised to vastly higher degrees of knowledge, Joh. xiv. 20, 26.; xvi. 13, 14, 23. This was most evidently fulfilled. He promised, that they thereby should be endowed with eloquence and courage, readiness of mind, and great force of speech, Matt. x. 19, 20.; and Luke xxi. 14, 15. This, also, was exceedingly apparent. It was foretold, that his followers should be endowed with miraculous gifts, Matt. vii. 22.; in which it is implied, that those gifts should be very common. See also Matt. x. 1.; Luke x. 9, 19.; and especially Mark xvi. 17, 18. This, also, was evidently fulfilled. Christ foretold that this should be in a few days after his ascension, Acts i. 8.; which accordingly came to pass.

Thirdly, Christ foretold what success the gospel should have. That it should be published in all nations, Matt. xxiv. 14.; that they should make disciples in all nations, Christ being with them to cause it to be so, Matt. xxviii. 18,—20.; and that they should bear witness unto Christ, to the uttermost parts of the earth, Acts i. 8. That he would build his church upon a Rock, and the gates of hell should not prevail against it. (See also Matt. iv. 19.; v. 14.; xiii. 24, 25, &c. 31, 33, 38, &c. 47, &c.; xxvi. 13.; Luke v. 10. with the context, x. 18, 19.; xiii. 18,—22.; xxiv. 47.; John xiv. 12.; xv. 16.; xvii. 2, 3. It was particularly foretold, that there should be a great harvest of souls, in a little time, in Samaria, John iv. 35,—38.; as it came to pass).

It was foretold, that the act of Mary, in anointing Christ's head, should be declared wherever the gospel should be preached, through the whole world, Matt. xxvi. 13.; as it has come to pass.

Note, That the foregoing observations are mainly taken out of Dr Tillotson's works: Serm. 183, 184, 185, 186, 187.

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Christ also foretold the destruction of other cities of Palestine, beside Jerusalem, Matt. xi. 21,—24.; Luke x. 12,—15. He foretold, that he should not appear to the Jews after his resurrection, but only to his disciples; Matt. xxiii. 39.; Luke xiii. 35.; John vii. 33, 34.; xiv. 19.

He foretold the calling of the Gentiles; and the rejection of the Jews; and their envy at the Gentiles on that account; Matt. viii. 10, 11, 12.; xii. 45.; xx. 12,—16.; xxi. 33,—43.; xxii. 1,—10.; Luke xiii. 25,—30.; Parable of the prodigal son, Luke xv. 15,—24.; xix. 9, 10.; John ix. 39.; x. 16.

Concerning that objection, that the four gospels, containing these prophecies, were written after the destruction of Jerusalem, and so after the existence of the principal events seemingly foretold in the gospels; what is said in the following quotation is worthy of notice.

“ There is only one subterfuge remaining to our adversaries; viz. That the gospels were written after the fulfilment of these things. But,

“ 1st. The most approved, and most ancient writers extant, relate, that at least the three first Evangelists wrote their gospels before the destruction of Jerusalem.

“ 2^d. That the Acts of the apostles were written before the destruction of Jerusalem, several things argue. That this history was written while Paul was a prisoner, is plain, from this, that although all Paul's acts are most exactly related, yet there is no mention of his deliverance from bonds: but the historian breaks off in the middle of his history. But Luke, before he wrote the Acts of the apostles, had already written his gospel; and to that he immediately appeals in the beginning of the Acts. But the gospel of Matthew is still more ancient. Hence all these must have been written before the destruction of Jerusalem.

“ 3^d. Nor is it to be omitted, that these very prophecies of Christ are so composed, that it very
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“ clearly appears from their manner, that they were
 “ by no means written after the abolition of that
 “ sacred constitution. For, in those prophecies, ac-
 “ cording to the prophetic style, the end of the world
 “ is immediately joined with the end of the old typi-
 “ cal world, as if the one immediately followed the
 “ other : which would not have been done, if these
 “ prophecies had been published by impostors after
 “ the destruction of Jerusalem. For in this case they
 “ would not have used the style most commonly used
 “ by the prophets.

“ Another good argument in favour of the true
 “ time of the writing of the gospels, may be taken
 “ from the epistles of Paul : for the most of them
 “ were written before his first imprisonment ; which
 “ is certain, from the most accurate chronologers.
 “ But he every where, in his writings, presupposes
 “ the gospel history *.”

49. As Christ wrought miracles in a very different manner from the prophets, acting therein in his own name, and as doing what he did of his own power and will ; so, also, he uttered prophecies in a way very diverse from that of the ancient prophets.

(1.) Whereas the ancient prophets, when they uttered their predictions, were wont to introduce them after this manner, *Hear ye the word of the Lord ;* or, *Thus saith the Lord ;* with such phrases shewing, that they did not speak of their own knowledge, but by special revelation and direction from God : Christ foretold things to come in a remarkably different manner and style, holding forth as much as that he spake of his own knowledge ; introducing his predictions, not with a *Thus saith the Lord*, but, *Verily, verily, I say unto you ;* as, Matt. xxiii. 36. ; xxiv. 34, 35. ; xxvi. 13. and 21 ; Mark xiv. 30. ; Luke xxi. 31, 32. ; John xiii. 38. ; xiv. 12. ; xvi. 20, 21, 22. The following place is very remarkable, shewing what great authority Christ attributed to his own word

* Stapferi Theol. Polem. Tom. II. p. 1127.

word in his predictions, Matt. xxiv. 34, 35. "Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but *my words* shall not pass away." These words are annexed to the chief prophecies that Christ ever uttered, which are contained in the xxiv. chapter of Matthew. See the same, Luke xxi. 31, 32.

(2.) Christ foretold future events, and those to be accomplished after his death, not only as what he knew by his own knowledge, but what he himself would accomplish or bring to pass; both future blessings to his church and people, and future calamity and destruction to those persons and people that were his enemies.

First, He foretold great events for the benefit and prosperity of his church, that he would bring to pass; John xiv. 12, 13, 14. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do, he shall do also; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go to my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it." John xvi. 7,—11. "Nevertheless, I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you, that I go away. For if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you. But if I depart, *I will send him unto you*. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged." And, ver. 20, 21, 22. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament; but the world shall rejoice, and ye shall be sorrowful. But your sorrow shall be turned into joy.—And ye now therefore have sorrow; but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice; and your joy no man taketh from you." See the whole xiii. xiv. xv. and xvi. chapters of John: and Luke xxi. 15,—18. "For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which

all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist. And ye shall be betrayed both by parents and brethren, and kinsfolks and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death: and ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. But there shall not an hair of your head perish." Luke xxiv. 49.

"And behold I send the promise of my Father upon you. But tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." So he foretold his own resurrection from the dead, as what he himself would bring to pass by his own power; John ii. 19. "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up:" John x. 17, 18. "I lay down my life, that I may take it again. No man taketh it from me. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." Mark xvi. 17, 18. "And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them: they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."

Secondly, He foretold many great events, implying awful calamity and destruction to his enemies, as what he himself would bring to pass. Thus he speaks of that mighty destruction of the Jewish nation by the Romans, as that from which he would have protected them, if they had believed on him; Matt. xxiii. 36, 37, 38. "Verily, I say unto you, all these things shall come on this generation. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold your house is left unto you desolate." This destruction is spoken of as what he would bring upon them, as a punishment for their rejection and contempt of him. Luke xix. 12, 13, 14. "He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them

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ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us." With ver. 27. "But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay before me."

(3.) Christ not only foretold things future, as having ability in himself to accomplish them, but he promised to give others ability to foretell future events by his Spirit, who should teach them future events from him, as of his knowledge, and hereby should honour him, as having, in his foreknowledge of future things, the same honour with the Father. John xvi. 7. "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come. But if I depart, I will send him unto you." Ver. 13, 14, 15. "When the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth. For he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine. Therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you."

It is observable, that never any prophet gave such great and manifold opportunity for proof and trial, whether he was a true prophet or not, in the multitude of predictions of events to be fulfilled in his lifetime, and during that generation after his death: and also in the plainness of his predictions; most of them being delivered, not in visionary, mystical representations, as the predictions of the prophets of old, but in a manner intelligible to all.

Therefore, the supposition, that if Christ were an impostor, God would so order it, that all these predictions, many of them so strange and wonderful, and in themselves so exceedingly unlikely, should exactly come to pass; and that God's providence should so wonderfully confirm his words, beyond those of any other prophet that ever had been in the world, is
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extremely unreasonable; especially considering the following things:

1st. That God had of old given this as a sign, by which his people might know a true prophet; viz. the coming to pass of the things foretold by him. And this rule is annexed by Moses to that great promise, which God, by him, gave of the Messiah, Deut. xviii. 15, &c. "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me: unto him ye shall hearken. According to all that thou desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb, in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God; neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the Lord said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him. But the prophet which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods; even that prophet shall die. And if thou say in thine heart, how shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass; that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken; but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously. Thou shalt not be afraid of him."

Now, therefore, since Jesus professed to be the Messiah, and the great Prophet foretold and promised by God in this place, and uttered so many great and wonderful prophecies; it might be expected, if he was a mere pretender, and spake presumptuously, and uttered what the Lord had not spoken; that that God, who here foretold the coming of the Messiah, and gave this rule to distinguish false prophets and

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vain pretenders, from him, should not have confirmed his prophecies, in his providence; but, in that case, would have given his people opportunity to refute, by this rule, his pretences.

2d, That foretelling future events, is spoken of by God, in the ancient prophecies of the kingdom of the Messiah, as one great thing wherein the Messiah should differ from the false gods and false prophets, and vain pretenders of the Heathens. In that great prophecy of the kingdom of the Messiah, beginning with the fortieth chapter of Isaiah to the end of the book, the foretelling of future events, in such a manner, as to shew, that the person who foretells, does foresee, and has a view of futurity, is often mentioned as a divine prerogative, and therefore as a good evidence, that he that does so is a divine person, or speaks by divine authority. Therefore the prophets and gods of the Heathens, are often challenged on this head, and the proof of their authority often put upon this issue: Isaiah xli. 21, 22, 23, 26, 28.; xlii. 8, 9.; xliii. 9, 10, 11, 12.; xliv. 6, 7, 8.; xlv. 3. and 21.; xlvi. 10.; xlviii. 14.—In this prophecy, it is declared, that herein the Messiah should differ from all vain pretenders; see chap. xli. 27.; and xlii. at the beginning; compared with chap. xli. 21, 22, 23, 26, 28, 29. Now therefore, is it credible, that God would so order it, that an impostor, one who falsely pretended to be the Messiah, should, in so high a degree, have this honour, which God had mentioned as the great and distinguishing honour which he would put on the true Messiah, as his Elect, in whom his soul delighted?

3d, That the foretelling of future events, as by his own knowledge, and as events that are to be accomplished by his own power, is spoken of by God, in those forementioned places, as his great prerogative, and as a good and sure evidence of the divinity of the person who can do thus; and especially God speaks thus, in those very places, in which he is foretelling the coming of the Messiah; and foretells that he should

should have this honour; as in Isaiah xli. 21, 22, 23.
 “Produce your cause, saith the Lord; bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob. Let them bring forth, and shew us what shall happen.—Shew the things that are to come hereafter, *that we may know that ye are Gods.*” Ver. 26. “Who hath declared from the beginning, that we may know, and before time, that we may say, he is righteous? Yea there is none that sheweth; yea there is none that declareth; yea there is none that heareth your words.” Then, in the next words, God promises the Messiah; to shew and declare whose coming, was beyond the power of the Heathen Gods: Ver. 27. “The first shall say to Zion, Behold, behold them; and I will give to Jerusalem, one that bringeth good tidings;” *i. e.* that foreshews glorious future things which God is about to do for his people. In the words that follow, it is signified that thus God would supply that defect which arose from the impotence of the Heathen Gods, and grant that thing wherein they were so deficient; ver. 28, 29. “For I beheld, and there was no man, even amongst them, and there was no counsellor, that when I asked of them, could answer a word. Behold they are all vanity, their works are nothing: their molten images are wind and confusion.” In the words that next follow, it is further signified, that God would supply this defect: “Behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth. I have put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.”

Therefore, since God mentions the foretelling of future events, in this manner, as a certain note of divinity, and a distinguishing honour that he would put on the Messiah, his elect, in whom his soul delighteth, Is it credible, that God would put this honour, in so great a degree, on one who falsely pretended to be the Messiah, and the beloved of God? And especially, when withal he pretended, in this respect, to have the same honour belonging to him which belongs to God; as John xvi. 13, 14, 15.

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“ He will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me ; for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath, are mine : Therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.” He also speaks of his knowledge of divine secrets, and future events, as the effect of the peculiar love that God had to him ; John v. 20. “ The Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doth.”

50. Great changes in kingdoms and nations, coming to pass according to God's predictions, is often spoken of by God himself, in the Old Testament, as a great evidence of his being the only true God, vastly distinguished from all other gods, and infinitely above them. Particularly, his foretelling the great changes brought to pass in the world relating to his church and people, such as, great deliverances and salvations to his own people, and great judgements and destruction to those nations that injure them, and are their enemies. These things were foretold by Christ, and were accomplished exactly according to his prediction. And the foretelling of those very things which Christ foretold, is spoken of expressly, as an evidence of true divinity, yea, as a distinguishing characteristic of the Messiah. Thus, in Isa. xli. 21. to chap. xlii. 21. ; concerning which passage of scripture, the following things are worthy of note :

(1.) That the foretelling of the revolutions of nations and monarchies, and particularly the destruction of Babylon by Cyrus, is greatly insisted on by God, as a great evidence of his being the true God, and as most clearly and greatly distinguishing him from all pretenders to divinity. See chap. xli. 21,—27. ; see also chap. xliv. 25. to the end, and xlv. 10. But Jesus was one that professed divinity, and foretold revolutions of nations as great and strange as this, yea, far more wonderful. He foretold the destruction of Jerusalem, which had been the holy city, and of the nation of the Jews, who had been God's own people,

people, and whose protector he had in a special manner been, and towards whom he exercised a most peculiar providence. He also foretold the deliverance of the Christians who were in Jerusalem. It was a greater thing, and less to be expected, that such a city and such a nation should be destroyed, than that Babylon should be destroyed; that a nation which had, for many ages, been his peculiar people, and peculiar treasure, and of which he had taken a special care above all nations, should be destroyed, than that destruction should befall a nation of aliens. Therefore, to foretell this destruction, with the various circumstances of it, as they actually took place, is a greater evidence of divine foreknowledge, than to foretel the destruction of a nation of aliens.

(2.) In this very passage, the foretelling of the conversion of the Gentiles from their heathenism, and from idolatry, is spoken of as the prerogative of the true God, a glory that should not be given to another; chap. xlii. 8, 9. with the foregoing part of the chapter, and what follows, to ver. 17.

Again, the foretelling of the gathering of God's people from all nations, and enlightening the blind, and opening the ears of the deaf, is spoken of as greatly and evidently distinguishing the true God and his servant the Messiah; chap. xliii. 6,—13. But thus did Jesus.

So, in chap. xliv. 3,—8. the foretelling of the conversion of multitudes, to profess themselves the people of the true God, with the exact accomplishment, is spoken of and insisted on as a certain and very distinguishing note of the true God. But thus did Jesus.

In the 25th and 26th verses of the same chapter, God declares that he frustrates the predictions of false pretenders, but will confirm the word of true prophets, and particularly of his servant, *i. e.* the Messiah, called God's servant often in the preceding chapters. See also Isa. xix. 12.

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In chap. xlv. 21. to the end, the foretelling of the conversion of the Gentiles from idolatry, to the worship of the true God, is represented in like manner, as an high prerogative and certain evidence of the true God.

In chap. xlviii. the foretelling of such great salvations, as speaking in his own name, is introduced as a great evidence, that the person who foretels, is the same who does the work.

51. The turning of the wilderness into a fruitful field, is spoken of by God as a peculiar work of God, and a certain sign of a divine hand; Isa. xli. 18, 19, 20. "I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys. I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the Shittah-tree, and the myrtle, and the oil-tree. I will set in the desert the fir-tree, and the pine and the box-tree together, that they may see and know, and consider and understand together, that the hand of the Lord hath done this." It is evident, this is not intended in a literal sense, but signifies the happy change in the state of mankind, from a state wherein men are represented as barren, as briars and thorns, and as wild beasts, to a morally excellent and happy state. This might be proved, by the frequent use of such figures in the prophecies of scripture. But it is manifest, that this, according to Christ's prediction, was effected, in a remarkable manner, by Christ himself, and his apostles and followers, in the turning of the world from heathenism, to the knowledge and worship of the true God, to just apprehensions of his moral government, and from all manner of vice to virtue.

This circumstance may be observed, that, as it was done at Christ's word, according to his prediction, and when he had foretold it as a thing that he would effect; and as it was done afterward, by his messengers in his name, pretending only to act as his ser-

vants : I say, its being done with these circumstances, did as much shew that he was the doer of it, as it appeared that he healed the sick and cast out devils, when these things were so done at his word, that whenever he spake and commanded the effect to be, it immediately was. It makes the relation between the effect and his word, and the dependence of the latter on the power of him that speaks the word, as evident.

The effect of turning the wilderness into a fruitful field, or an effect described in like figures of speech, is spoken of by God as one of the greatest of the works of God, far greater than those that were wrought for Israel in bringing them out of Egypt, Isa. xliii. 15,—21.

If we consider the particular circumstances of the predictions of Jesus, in the success of his gospel, and compare them with what is spoken of in the Old Testament, as the peculiar and distinguishing work of God, the evidences of the authority and divinity of Jesus will appear yet greater. Disappointing and baffling the power and subtilty of the potent, the crafty, and the cruel, in their attempts for the destruction of the poor, the helpless, and the meek; and finally, in a remarkable manner, giving the latter the ascendancy and victory over their oppressors and persecutors, and terribly destroying them, is often spoken of as a peculiar work of the Most High, remarkably manifesting a divine hand, and gloriously displaying God's supreme power, and wisdom, and divine mercy. See Job v. 11,—16.; the song of Hannah, in 1 Sam. ii.; Job xii. 17, 18, 19; particularly God's thus baffling the attempts of the heathens against those that fear him, and that hope in his mercy; Psal. xxxiii. 10. to the end, and Psal. xlv. throughout.

We find these things often spoken of as the peculiar and glorious work of the Most High, in prophecies of the days of the Messiah, with a particular application to what he will do, in the times of his kingdom, for his people who are weak and helpless. See Isa.

Isa. xxv. 1,—8.; xl. 22,—24. with ver. 27. to the end; xli. 11, 12, &c.; liv. 15,—17.; xlix. 24,—26.; Psal. lxxviii. throughout; Psal. cxviii. 5,—23. Yea, this is spoken of as the work and glory of the Messiah himself; Psal. lxxii. 4.; Isa. xi. 4.; and Psal. xlv. 3, 4, 5.

These things are fulfilled, in the most remarkable manner that ever they were, in disappointing and baffling the policy, power, and rage of the greatest, wisest, most potent empire of the heathens, that ever was in the world, in their greatest rage and violence, and bringing of the church of Christ to a complete victory, so as to overthrow the ancient, long established heathenism of the world, in all the nations any where taken notice of in scripture, so that it never has again revived.

It is remarkable that it is foretold, particularly in Isa. xlii. That the Messiah should set judgement in the earth, and his law or religion among the nations, particularly *the isles*, or Europe, against strong opposition and through great sufferings, under which, his church should seem ready to be extinguished or crushed, like smoking flax, or a bruised reed: but that, finally, judgement should be brought forth to victory.

52. That before the coming of Christ, there was a general expectation spread over all the eastern nations, that out of Judea should arise a person, who should be governor of the world, is expressly affirmed by the Roman historians *Suetonius* and *Tacitus*. In *Suetonius* are these words: "Percrebuerat oriente
" toto verus et constans opinio, esse in fatis, ut Ju-
" dæa profecti rerum potirentur." In *Tacitus* are these words: "Pluribus persuasio inerat, antiquis
" sacerdotum libris contineri, eo ipso tempore fore,
" ut valesceret oriens, profectique Judæa rerum poti-
" rentur." The star that appeared at Christ's birth, and the journey of the Chaldean wise men, is mentioned by *Chalcidius the Platonist*. Herod's causing all the children in Bethlehem, under two years old,

to be slain, and the reflection made upon him, on that occasion, by the emperor Augustus, is related by Macrobius in the following words: "Cum audisset Augustus, inter pueros quos in Syria Herodes rex Judæorum intra bimatum jussit interfici, filium quoque ejus occisum, ait, melius est Herodis par-cum esse, quam filium;" Macrob. lib. ii. cap. 4. Many of the miracles that Jesus wrought in his lifetime, are, as to the matters of fact, particularly his healing the lame and the blind, and casting out devils, expressly owned by the most implacable enemies of Christianity; by Celsus and Julian, and the authors of the Jewish Talmud. And that the power of the heathen gods ceased, after the coming of Christ, is acknowledged by Porphyry, who attributes it to their being angry at the setting up of the Christian religion, which he styles impious and profane. Many particulars of the collateral history, concerning John the Baptist, and Herod, and Pilate, are largely recorded by Josephus. The crucifixion of Christ under Pontius Pilate, is related by Tacitus. And divers of the most remarkable circumstances attending it, such as the earthquake, and miraculous darkness, were recorded in the public Roman registers, commonly appealed to by the first Christian writers, as what could not be denied by the adversaries themselves, and are, in a very particular manner, attested by Phlegon. That extraordinary Sybilline prophecy, referred to by Virgil, in his fourth eclogue, so much like Isaiah's prophecies of Christ, shews the expectation of the heathen world at that time.

"It was usual for the Roman deputies, or governors of provinces, to give an account of the chief things during their administrations, to the emperor. Accordingly, Pilate gave an account to Tiberius, of what had happened in his time, concerning Jesus of Nazareth; an account of his miracles, death, crucifixion, and resurrection: upon which it is said, that the emperor proposed it to the senate, that he should be admitted into the number
" of

" their gods ; and decreed, that none should be ac-
 " cused for being a Christian, during his reign. Two
 " things I may remark, with reference to this mat-
 " ter, namely, that Pilate's account was enrolled in
 " the public records at Rome, and that the fathers,
 " Justin Martyr and Tertullian, afterwards appealed
 " to the emperor and senate upon this head, in their
 " apologies for the Christian religion : which we can-
 " not imagine they would have done, had they not
 " been well assured of the fact, that such things were
 " registered, and that their enemies had nothing to
 " allege in opposition to it. That this is likely to be
 " true, may be argued from the circumstances of the
 " case. The emperors expected from their deputies,
 " an account of any notable event that happened
 " where they were. And can we imagine that Pi-
 " late either would or durst conceal so great an event,
 " as that concerning Jesus Christ, about which all
 " Judea was in an uproar, and in which he himself
 " had so great a share ? From hence, then, we may
 " infer the probability of the story, and, I think,
 " conclude its certainty, from the apologies I have
 " mentioned of Justin Martyr and Tertullian. They
 " were both learned men, lived in the next century ;
 " and I cannot think it consistent with their charac-
 " ter to appeal, as we find they do, to the head of
 " the Roman empire, and to so august a body as the
 " Roman senate, concerning this fact, had it been
 " in the least doubtful." Bennet's Inspiration of the
 Scriptures, page 103, 104, 105.

The words of Phlegon concerning the eclipse at
 the time of Christ's passion, book xiii. of his Chroni-
 con or Olympiads, are these : " In the fourth year of
 " the two hundred and second Olympiad, there hap-
 " pened the greatest eclipse of the sun that ever was
 " known. There was such a dark night at the sixth
 " hour of the day, that the stars were seen in the
 " heavens ; and there was an earthquake in Bithynia,
 " which overturned a great part of Nicæa." These
 words are to be seen in Eusebius's and Hieronymus's

Chronicon ; and Origen mentions it, tract. 34. upon Mat., and in his 2., against Celsus. And Chalcidius the Platonist, speaking of the star which happened at Christ's birth, in his commentary on Timæus, has these words : " There is another more
 " holy and more venerable history, which relates the
 " appearance of a new star, not to foretel diseases
 " and death, but the descent of a venerable God, to
 " preserve mankind, and to shew favour to the af-
 " fairs of mortals ; which star the wise men of Chal-
 " dea observing, as they travelled in the night, and
 " being very well skilled in viewing the heavenly bo-
 " dies, they are said to have sought after the new
 " birth of this God ; and having found that majesty
 " in a child, they paid him worship, and made such
 " vows as were agreeable to so great a God." Gro-
 tius de verit. lib. iii. sect. 14.

53. " Many particulars of Moses's life, are related
 " by several ancient writers : The eminent piety of
 " the most ancient Jews, by Strabo and Justin ; divers
 " actions of David and Solomon, in the Phœnician
 " annals ; some of the actions of Elijah, by Menan-
 " der, and confessed by Julian himself ; the history
 " of Jonah, under the name of Hercules, by Lyco-
 " phron and Æneas Gazæus ; and the history of the
 " following times by many more authors." Clarke's
 evidences of natural and revealed religion, page 192,
 193. " Tatian, in his book against the Greeks, re-
 " lates, that amongst the Phœnicians, flourished three
 " ancient historians, Theodotus, Hysicrates, and Mo-
 " chus, who all of them delivered in their histories,
 " translated into Greek by Lætus, under which of
 " the kings happened the rapture of Europa, the
 " voyage of Menelaus into Phœnicia, and the league
 " and friendship between Solomon and Hiram, when
 " Hiram gave his daughter to Solomon, and furni-
 " shed him with timber for building the temple ; and
 " that the same is affirmed by Menander of Perga-
 " mus. Josephus lets us know, that the annals of
 " the

“ the Tyrians, from the days of Abibalus and Hiram, kings of Tyre, were extant in his days, and
 “ that Menander of Pergamus translated them into
 “ Greek; and that Hiram’s friendship to Solomon,
 “ and assistance in building the temple, was mention-
 “ ed in them; and that the temple was founded in
 “ the 11th year of Hiram.” Newton’s Chronology,
 p. 114. Diodorus saith, in his 40th book, “ That in
 “ Egypt there were formerly multitudes of strangers
 “ of several nations, who used foreign rites and cere-
 “ monies in worshipping the gods: for which they
 “ were expelled Egypt; and under Danaus, Cadmus,
 “ and other skilful commanders, after great hard-
 “ ships, came into Greece and other places. But
 “ the greatest part of them came into Judea, not far
 “ from Egypt, a country then uninhabited and de-
 “ sert, being conducted thither by one Moses, a wise
 “ and valiant man, who, after he had possessed him-
 “ self of the country, among other things built Je-
 “ rusalem and the temple.” Newton’s Chronology,
 p. 204. Austin tells us, that the common people of
 Afric, being asked who they were? replied, Chana-
 ni, or Canaanites. And Procopius, a Christian histo-
 rian, tells us of two pillars in the west of Afric, with
 inscriptions, signifying, that the people were Canaan-
 ites that fled from Joshua. Ibid. p. 198.

“ Many things concerning Joseph, his character,
 “ conduct, and management in Egypt, are mentioned
 “ by Justin. Several particulars relating to the Is-
 “ raelites of old, occur in ancient authors; as their
 “ going into Egypt, and their coming out of it again,
 “ attested by Manetho, Berosus, Strabo, Justin, and
 “ others: the dividing of the Red Sea for a passage
 “ to them, by Artapanus and Diodorus Siculus:
 “ their travelling in the desert of Arabia, and com-
 “ ing to Mount Sinai, by Justin: their being fed with
 “ manna in the wilderness, by Artapanus, who says
 “ they lived there upon a certain snow which God rain-
 “ ed from heaven. As to Moses himself, his story is wit-
 “ nessed to and recorded by Egyptian, Phœnician, Chal-
 “ dean,

“ dean, and Grecian writers. Besides what is after-
 “ wards taken notice of by authors, there is a parti-
 “ cular and remarkable account of him given by Ar-
 “ tapanus and Numenius, as, of his being taken out
 “ of the water, brought up at court, working mi-
 “ racles, and being opposed before the king by cer-
 “ tain magicians, called Jannes and Jambres, who
 “ attempted to do the like, &c. There are diverse
 “ other facts related in the Old Testament, the me-
 “ mory whereof seems to have been preserved among
 “ the heathens, and which were probably referred to
 “ in their fables: as, the story of Jephtha’s daughter,
 “ under the name of Iphigenia.” L. Latham’s mar-
 ginal notes to Bennet’s *Inspiration of the Scriptures*,
 page 96, 97.

54. Clemens Alexandrinus, *Strom. i.*, reports out
 of the books of the Egyptian priests, that an Egyptian
 was slain by the words of Moses: and *Strom. v.*, he
 relates some things belonging to Moses, out of Arta-
 panus, though not very truly. Justin, out of Tragas
 Pompeius, says of Moses, “ he was leader of those
 “ that were banished, and took away the sacred things
 “ of the Egyptians, which they endeavouring to re-
 “ cover with arms, were forced by a tempest to re-
 “ turn home. And Moses being entered into his
 “ own country of Damascus, he took possession of
 “ Mount Sinah.” And what follows is a mixture of
 truth and falsehood. Where we find *Arvas* written in
 him, it should be read *Arnas*, who is Aaron, not the
 son of Moses, as he imagines, but the brother, and
 a priest. The Orphic verses expressly mention his
 being taken out of the water, and the two tables that
 were given by God. The verses are thus:

“ So was it said of old, so he commands,
 “ Who’s born of water; who received of God
 “ The double tables of the law.”

The great Scaliger, in these verses, instead of *huso-*
genes, with a little variation of the shape of a letter,
 reads *hudogenes*, born of water.

The

The ancient writer of the Orphic verses, whoever he was, added these lines, after he had said that there was but one God to be worshiped, who was the creator and governor of the world.

Palemon, who seems to have lived in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, has these words: "In the reign of Apis the son of Pharoneus, part of the Egyptian army went out of Egypt, and dwelt in Syria, called Palestine, not far from Arabia."

Several things are related concerning Moses's coming out of Egypt, from the Egyptian writers, Manetho, Lyfimachus, &c. The places are in Josephus against Appian, with abundance of falsities, as coming from people who hated the Jews. From hence Tacitus took his account of them. But it appears, from all these compared together, that the Hebrews descended from the Assyrians, and, possessing a great part of Egypt, led the life of shepherds. But afterwards, being burdened with hard labour, they came out of Egypt under the command of Moses, some of the Egyptians accompanying them, and went through the country of the Arabians unto Palestine, Syria, and there set up rites, contrary to those of the Egyptians.

Diodorus Siculus, in his first book, where he treats of those who made the gods to be the authors of their laws, says, "Among the Jews was Moses, who called God by the name of *ἰάω*," *i. e.* *Jehovah*, which was so pronounced by the oracles and in the Orphic verses, mentioned by the ancients.

Strabo, in his sixteenth book, speaking of Moses, as an Egyptian priest, which he had from the Egyptian writers, as appears in Josephus, says, "Many who worship the Deity, agreed with him (Moses); for he both said and taught, that the Egyptians did not rightly conceive of God, when they likened him to wild beasts and cattle; nor the Lybians nor the Greeks, in resembling him by a human shape. For God is no other than the universe which surrounds

“ rounds us, the earth, and the sea, and the heaven,
 “ and the world, and the nature of things, as they
 “ are called by us. Who, says he, (*i. e.* Moses) that
 “ has any understanding, would presume to form
 “ any image like to these things that are about us?
 “ Wherefore, we ought to lay aside all carved images,
 “ and worship him in the innermost part of a tem-
 “ ple worthy of him, without any figure.” He adds,
 that this was the opinion of good men. He adds al-
 so, that sacred rites were instituted by him, which
 were not burdensome for their costliness, nor hate-
 ful, as attended with madness. He mentions cir-
 cumcision, the meats that were forbidden, and the
 like. And after he had shewn that man was natu-
 rally desirous of civil society, he tells us, that it is
 promoted by divine and human precepts, but more
 effectually by divine.

Pliny, book xxx. chap. 1. says, “ There is ano-
 “ ther party of magicians which spring from Moses.”
 Juvenal has these lines :

“ They learn, and keep, and fear the Jewish law,
 “ Which Moses in his secret volume gave.”

Tacitus, hist. v., according to the Egyptian fables,
 calls Moses one of them that were banished.

Dionysius Longinus, who lived in the time of Au-
 relian the emperor, a favourite of Zenobia, queen of
 the Palmyrians, in his book of the Sublime, after he
 had said that they who speak of God, ought to take
 care to represent him as great and pure, and without
 mixture, adds, “ Thus does he who gave laws to the
 “ Jews, who was an extraordinary man, who con-
 “ ceived and spake worthily of the power of God,
 “ when he writes in the beginning of his laws, *God*
 “ *spake* ; What ? *Let there be light ; and there was*
 “ *light. Let there be earth ; and it was so.*”

Chalcidius took many things out of Moses, of whom
 he speaks thus : “ Moses was the wisest of men, who,
 “ as they say, was enlivened, not by human elo-
 “ quence, but by divine inspiration.”

Numenius,

Numenius, as Eusebius quotes his words, book viii. chap. 8. says, " Afterwards, Jannes and Mambres, Egyptian scribes, were thought to be famous for magical arts, about the time that the Jews were driven out of Egypt. For these were they who were chosen out of the multitude of the Egyptians, to contend with Musæus the leader of the Jews, a man very powerful with God by prayers; and they seemed to be able to repel those sore calamities which were brought upon Egypt by Musæus." Origen against Celsus, refers to the same place of Numenius.

Artapanus, in the same Eusebius, book ix. chap. 27. calls them the priests of Memphis, who were commanded by the king to be put to death, if they did not do things equal to Moses.

Strabo, in his 14th book, after the history of Moses, says, " That his followers, for a considerable time, kept his precepts, and were truly righteous and godly." And a little after, he says, " That those who believed in Moses, worshipped God, and were lovers of equity."

These things concerning Moses, are taken from Grotius de Verit. lib. i. sect. 16.

55. Eusebius says, Prep. book ix. chap. 10. That Eupolemus wrote a book concerning Elijah's prophecy: and, in the 39th chapter of the same book, Eusebius quotes a place of his, concerning Jeremiah's prophecy.

The history of Jonah's being three days in the whale's belly, is in Lycophron and Aeneas Gazzæus, only under the name of Hercules. The verses in Lycophron are these:

" Of that three-nighted lion whom, of old,
 " Triton's fierce dog with furious jaws devoured;
 " Within whose bowels, tearing of his liver,
 " He rolled, burning with heat, though without fire;
 " His head with drops of sweat bedew'd all o'er."

Upon

Upon which place, Tzetzes says, " Because he
 " was three days within the whale." And Æneas
 Gazæus, in Theophrastus, has these words: " Ac-
 " cording to the story of Hercules, who was saved
 " by a whale swallowing him up, when the ship
 " wherein he sailed was wrecked."

Menander, in his Phœnician history, mentions that
 great drought that happened in the time of Elias;
 that is, when Ithobalus reigned amongst the Tyrians.
 See Josephus in his ancient history, book viii. ch. 7.—
 These things from Grotius De Verit. lib. i. sect 16.

There is a remarkable place concerning David,
 quoted by Josephus, book vii. chap. 6. of his ancient
 history, out of the iv. of Damascenus's history. " A
 " long while after this, there was a certain man of
 " that country, who was very powerful. His name
 " was Adadus, who reigned in Damascus and the
 " other parts of Syria, except Phœnice. He waged
 " war with David king of Judea; and having fought
 " many battles, the last was at Euphrates, where he
 " was overcome. He was accounted one of the best
 " of kings for strength and valour. After his death,
 " his children reigned for ten generations, each of
 " them continuing his father's government and name,
 " in the same manner as the Egyptian kings are cal-
 " led Ptolemies. The third being the most potent
 " of them all, being willing to recover the victory
 " his grandfather had lost, made war upon the Jews,
 " and laid waste that which is now called Samaria."
 The first part of this history we have, 2 Sam. viii. 5.;
 1 Chron. xviii. : and the latter part, 1 Kings xx. Gro-
 tius de Verit. lib. iii. sect. 16.

56. This Adadus is called by Josephus, Ader, and
 Adores by Justin, out of Tragus. Eusebius, in his
 gospel preparation, book iv. chap. 30. tells us more
 things concerning David out of Eupolemus. And
 the forementioned Josephus, in the same chapter, and
 in his first against Appian, brings this place out of
 Dius's Phœnician history. " After Abibalus's death,
 " his

" his son Hiram reigned. This man increased the
 " eastern part of the city, and much enlarged the
 " city; and he joined Jupiter Olympius's temple to
 " the city, which before stood by itself on an island,
 " by filling up the space between; and he adorned it
 " with gifts of gold offered to the gods. He also
 " went up to Libanus, and cut down timber to ad-
 " orn the temple with. And they say, that Solo-
 " mon who reigned in Jerusalem, sent riddles to Hi-
 " ram, and received some from him: he that could
 " not resolve the riddles, was to pay a large sum of
 " money. Afterward, Abdemonus, a man of Tyre,
 " resolved the riddles that were proposed, and sent
 " others; which Solomon not resolving, paid a large
 " sum of money to Hiram." He afterwards adds a
 famous place of Menander the Ephesian, who wrote
 the affairs of the Greeks and Barbarians: " After
 " Abibalus's death, his son Hiram succeeded in the
 " government. He lived thirty-four years, and in-
 " closed the large country, and erected the golden
 " pillar in Jupiter's temple. He afterward cut down
 " wood from the mountain called Libanus, cedar
 " trees for the roof of the temple; and pulled down
 " the old temples, and built new. He consecrated
 " the grove of Hercules and Astarte; but Hercules's
 " first, in the month Peretius; and afterward Astarte's,
 " about the time that he invaded the Tityans for not
 " paying tribute, and returned from subjecting them.
 " About this time, there was one Abdemonus, a
 " young man, who overcame in explaining the rid-
 " dles proposed by Solomon the king of Jerusalem."

Theophilus Antiochenus, in his 3d book to Autoly-
 chus, has set down this place of Menander, but has
 contracted it. This Hiram, and Solomon who was
 contemporary with him, are mentioned also by Alex-
 ander Polyhistor, Menander Pergamenus, and Læ-
 tus, in the Phœnician accounts, as Clemens affirms,
 Strom. i.

The memory of Hazael, King of Syria, whose
 name is in 1 Kings xxix. 15., 2 Kings viii. 11., and
 K xii.

xii. 17. and xiii. 3, 24., is preserved at Damascus with divine worship, as Josephus relates, b. 9. ch. 2. of his *antient history*. The same name is in Justin, out of Tragus. Concerning Salmaneser, who carried the ten tribes into captivity, as is related in 2 Kings xviii. 3. &c. ; and who took Samaria, 2 Kings xviii. 9. ; there is a place of Menander Ephesius, we before spoke of, in Josephus, b. 9. ch. 14., as follows : “ Elulæus reign-
 “ ed thirty-six years. This man, with a fleet, re-
 “ duced the Citteans, who revolted from him. But
 “ the king of Assyria sent against them, and brought
 “ war upon all Phœnicia ; and having made peace
 “ with them all, returned back again. But Sidon,
 “ Arce, Palætyrus, and many other cities, who had
 “ yielded themselves to the king of Assyria, revolted
 “ from the Tyrian government. Yet the Tyrians
 “ not submitting, the king of Assyria returned upon
 “ them again, after he had received from the Phœ-
 “ nicians sixty ships, and eight hundred rowers ; a-
 “ gainst which, the Tyrians coming out with twelve
 “ ships, broke their enemies ships in pieces, and
 “ took five hundred men prisoners. Hereupon, the
 “ price of every thing was raised in Tyre. Then the
 “ king of Assyria departed, and placed guards upon
 “ the rivers, and upon the water-pipes, that they
 “ might hinder the Tyrians from drawing any water.
 “ And this they did for five years, and they were
 “ forced to drink out of wells which they digged.”
 Josephus adds in the same place, that Salmaneser, the name of this king, remained till his time in the Tyrian records. Senacherib, who subdued almost all Judea, except Jerusalem, as is related, 2 Kings xviii. 13. ; 2 Chron. xxxii. ; Is. xxxvi. 1. : his name and expeditions into Asia and Egypt, are found in Berofus’s Chaldaics, as the same Josephus testifies, b. 10. ch. 1. And Herodotus, in his second book, mentions the same Senacherib, and calls him king of the Arabians and Assyrians. Baladan, king of Babylon, is mentioned in 2 Kings xx. 12., and Isai. xxxix. ; and the same name is in Berofus’s Babylonics, as Josephus testifies
 in

in his antient history, b. 10. ch. 3. Herodotus mentions the battle in Megiddo, in which Necho, king of Egypt, overcame the Jews, (which history is in 2 Chron. xxxv. 22., Zech. xii. 1.), in the foresaid second book, in these words: "And Necho encountered the Syrians, (for so Herodotus always calls the Jews, as do others also), in a land fight, and overcame them in Magdolus."—These things from Grotius de Verit. Book iii. sect. 16.

The things which Grotius there quotes from heathen histories about Nebuchadnezzar, and other things relating to the captivity of the Jews, and the destruction of Babylon, &c. are too many and large to be transcribed: but this which Grotius there says, is especially worthy of note. Eusebius, both in his Chronicon, and in the end of the ninth of his Preparation, tells us, that Nebuchadonasar is mentioned also by Abydenus, who wrote of the Assyrians. The words are these: "Megasthenes says, that Nabuchadrosarus was stronger than Hercules, and waged war against Lybia and Iberia; and having overcome them, he planted them in several colonies on the right shore of the sea. And the Chaldeans relate, moreover, concerning him, that as he was going into his palace on a certain time, he was inspired by a god, and spake the following words: I, Nabuchadrosarus, foretell a sad calamity that will befall you, O Babylonians, which neither Belus, our forefather, nor Queen Beltis, could persuade the fates to avert. There shall come a Persian mule, who, assisted by your gods, shall bring slavery upon you. Medus, the glory of the Assyrians, will also help to do this. I wish, that before he betrays his countrymen, some Charybdis or sea would swallow him up, or destroy him: or that he were directed another way through the wilderness, where there are no cities or footsteps of men; where wild beasts feed, and the birds fly about, that he might wander solitary among the rocks and
K 2 " dens;

“ dens ; and that an happy end had overtaken me ;
 “ before these things were put into my mind. Having
 “ prophesied this, he suddenly disappeared.” Here,
 several things related in Daniel, seem to be confound-
 ed and jumbled together ; as particularly, Nebuchad-
 nezzar’s dream about the four empires that should
 destroy one another, Dan. ii. ; particularly that part
 of it that relates to the Persian empire’s destroying
 the Babylonian, and what we have an account of,
 chap. iv. 1, 4, 5, 28. to the end of the chapter.

57. In Greece, before the Phenicians introduced
 the deifying of dead men, the Greeks had a council
 of elders in every town for the government thereof,
 and a place where the elders and people worshipped
 their God with sacrifices. And when many of those
 towns, for their common safety, united under a com-
 mon council, they erected a prytaneum or court, in
 one of the towns, where the council and people met
 at certain times, to consult their common safety, and
 worship their common god with sacrifices, and to
 buy and sell. The towns where the councils met,
 the Greeks called *δημοι*, peoples, or communities, or
 corporation-towns. And at length, when many of
 these *δημοι*, for their common safety, united by con-
 sent, under one common council, they erected a pry-
 taneum in one of the *δημοι*, for the common council
 and people to meet in, and to consult and worship
 in, and feast, and buy and sell. And this *δemos* they
 walled about for its safety, and called it *την πολιν*, the
 city. And when these councils made war upon their
 neighbours, they had a general commander to lead
 their armies, and he became their king. So Thucy-
 dides tells us, that under Cecrops, and the ancient
 kings, until Theseus, Attica was always inhabited,
 city by city, each having magistrates and prytanea.
 Neither did they consult their king, when there was
 no fear of danger ; but each apart, administered their
 own commonwealth, and had their own council ; and
 even sometimes made war, as the Eleusinians with Eu-
 molpus

molpus did against Erechtheus. But when Theseus, a prudent and potent man, obtained the kingdom, he took away the courts and magistrates of the other cities, and made them all meet at one council and prytaneum, at Athens. Palemon, as he is cited by Strabo, tells us, that in this body of Attica, there were one hundred and seventy *δῆμοι*; and Philochorus relates, that when Attica was invested by sea and land by the Cares and Bœotii, Cecrops, the first of any man, reduced the multitude, *i. e.* the hundred and seventy *δῆμοι*, into twelve cities; and that Theseus contracted the twelve into one, which was Athens.

The original of the kingdom of the Argives, was much after the same manner. For Pausanias tells us, that Pharonæus, the son of Inachus, was the first who gathered into one community the Argives, who, till then, were scattered, and lived every where apart; and the place where they were first assembled, was called Pharonicum, the city of Pharonæus. And Strabo observes, that Homer calls the places which he reckons up in Peloponnesus, a few excepted, not cities, but regions; because each of them consisted of a convocation of many *δῆμοι*, free towns, out of which, afterwards, noble cities were built, and frequented. So the Argives composed Mantinée in Arcadia out of five towns, and Tégæa out of nine; and out of so many was Heræa built by Cleombrotus, or by Cleonymus. So also Ægium was built out of seven or eight towns, Patræ out of seven, and Dymæ out of eight. So Elis was erected by the conflux of many towns into one city.

Pausanias tells us, that the Arcadians accounted Pelasgus the first man; and that he was the first king; and taught the ignorant people to build houses for defending themselves from heat, and cold, and rain, and to make themselves garments of skins; and, instead of herbs and roots, which were sometimes noxious, to eat the acorns of the beech-tree; and that his son Lycaon, built the oldest city in all Greece. He tells us also, that in the days of Lelex, the Spar-

tans lived in villages apart. The Greeks, therefore, began to build in the days of Pelasgus, the father of Lycaon. Till then, they lived in woods and caves of the earth. The first houses were of clay, till the brothers, Euryalus and Hyperbius, taught them to harden the clay into bricks, and to build therewith.

When Cænatrius, the son of Lycaon, carried a colony into Italy, he found the country, for the most part, uninhabited; and, where it was inhabited, peopled but thinly: and seizing a part of it, he built towns in the mountains, little and numerous, as above. These towns were without walls: but after this colony grew numerous, and began to want room, they expelled the Siculi, compassed many cities with walls, and became possessed of all the territory between the two rivers Liris and Tiber. And it is to be understood, that those cities had their councils and prytanea, after the manner of the Greeks. For Dionysius tells us, that the new kingdom of Rome, as Romulus left it, consisted of thirty courts or councils, in thirty towns, each with the sacred fire kept in the prytaneum of the court for the senators, who met there to perform sacred rites, after the manner of the Greeks. But when Numa, the successor of Romulus, reigned, he, leaving the several fires in their own courts, instituted one common to them all at Rome. Whence Rome was not a complete city, before the days of Numa.

When navigation was so far improved, that the Phenicians began to leave the sea-shore, and sail the Mediterranean by the help of the stars, it may be presumed, they began to discover the islands of the Mediterranean, and, for the sake of traffic, to sail as far as Greece: and this was not long before they carried away Io, the daughter of Inochus, from Argos. The Carcs first infested the Grecian seas with piracy; and then Minos, the son of Europa, got up a potent fleet, and sent out colonies. For Diodorus tells us, that the Cyclades islands, those near Crete, were:

were at first desolate and uninhabited. But Minos having a potent fleet; sent many colonies out of Crete, and peopled many of them. And particularly, that the island Carpathus was first seized by the soldiers of Minos. Syme lay waste and desolate till Triops came thither with a colony under Chthonius. Strangyle or Naxus was first inhabited by the Thracians in the days of Boreas, a little before the Argonautic expedition. Samos was at first desert, and inhabited only by a great multitude of terrible wild beasts, till Macareus peopled it, as he did also the islands Chios and Cos. Lesbos lay waste and desolate, till Xanthus sailed thither with a colony. Tenedas lay desolate, till Tenes, a little before the Trojan war, sailed thither from Troas. Aristæus, who married Autonoe, the daughter of Cadmus, carried a colony from Thebes into Cæa, an island not inhabited before. The island Rhodes was at first called Ophiusa, being full of serpents before Phorbas, a prince of Argos, went thither, and made it habitable, by destroying the serpents; in memory of which, he is delineated in the heavens, in the constellation of Ophiuchus. The discovery of this, and some other islands, made a report, that they rose out of the sea. "In Asia Delos emerfit, et Hiera, et Anaphe, et Rhodus," saith Ammianus: and Pliny, "Claræ jam pridem insulæ Delos et Rhodus memorix produntur enatæ, postea minores, ultra Melon Anaphe, inter Lemnum et Hellespontum Nea, inter Lebedum et Teon Halone," &c.

Diodorus tells us also, that the seven islands called Æolides, between Italy and Sicily, were desert and uninhabited, till Liparus and Æolus, a little before the Trojan war, went thither from Italy and peopled them: and that Malta and Ganlus, or Gandus, on the other side of Sicily, were first peopled by Phenicians, and so was Medera without the straits: and Homer writes, that Ulysses found the island of Ogygia covered with wood, and uninhabited, except by Calypso and her maids, who lived in a cave without houses.

The

The Sycaireans were reputed the first inhabitants of Sicily, and they built little villages or towns upon hills, and every town had its own king; and by this means they spread over the country, before they formed themselves into larger governments with a common king. The first inhabitants of Crete, according to Diodorus, were called Eteocretans: but whence they were, and how they came thither, is not said in history. Then sailed thither a colony of Pelasgians from Greece; and soon after, Teutamus, the grandfather of Minos, carried thither a colony of Dorians from Laconia, and from the territory of Olympia in Peloponnesus: and these several colonies spake several languages, and fed on the spontaneous fruits of the earth, and lived quietly in caves and huts, till the invention of iron tools in the days of Asterius, the son of Teutamus; and at length, were reduced into one kingdom and one people, by Minos, who was their first lawgiver, and built many towns and ships, and introduced ploughing and sowing. The island of Cyprus was discovered by the Phenicians; for Eratostenes tells us, that "Cyprus was
 " at first so overgrown with wood, that it could not
 " be tilled; and that they first cut down the wood
 " for the melting of the copper and silver; and after-
 " ward, when they began to sail freely on the Me-
 " diterranean, that is, presently after the Trojan
 " war, they built ships, and even navies of it. And
 " when they could not thus destroy the wood, they
 " gave every man leave to cut down what wood he
 " pleased, and to possess all the ground which he
 " cleared of wood." So also, Europe, at first, abounded very much with woods; one of which, called the Hercynian, took up a great part of Germany, being full nine days journey broad, and above forty long, in Julius Cæsar's days. And yet the Europeans had been cutting down their woods to make room for mankind, ever since the invention of iron tools in the days of Asterius and Minos.

All these footsteps there are of the first peopling of Europe, and its islands. Before those days, it seems to have been but thinly peopled by those who wandered without houses, sheltering themselves from rain and wild beasts, in thickets and caves of the earth: such as were the caves in mount Ida in Crete, in which Minos was educated and buried; the cave of Cacus, and the catacombs in Italy, near Rome and Naples, afterwards turned into burying places; the Syringes, and many other caves in the sides of the mountains of Egypt; the caves of the Troglodytes, between Egypt and the Red-sea, and those of the Pharusii in Africa, mentioned by Strabo; and the caves, thickets, rocks, high places, and pits, in which the Israelites hid themselves from the Philistines in the days of Saul, 1 Sam. xiii. 6.

As to the people of Lybia in Africa, Diodorus tells us, that "Uranus, the father of Hyperion, and "grandfather of Helius and Selene, was their first "common king, and caused the people, who, till then, "wandered up and down, to dwell in towns." And Herodotus tells us, that all Media was peopled by *δαμοι*, towns without walls, till they revolted from the Assyrians, which was about two hundred and sixty-seven years after the death of Solomon; and that, after that revolt, they set up a king over them, and built Ecbatane with walls for his seat, the first town which they walled about. And about seventy-two years after the death of Solomon, Benhadad, king of Syria, had thirty-two kings in his army against Ahab. And when Joshua conquered the land of Canaan, every city of the Canaanites had its own king, like the cities of Europe, before they conquered one another. And one of those kings, Adonibezek, the king of Bezek, had conquered seventy other kings a little before; Judg. i. 7. And therefore, towns began to be built in that land, not many ages before the days of Joshua. For the patriarchs wandered there in tents, and fed their flocks wherever they pleased;

pleased; the fields of Phœnicia not being yet fully appropriated, for want of people.

These footsteps there are of the first peopling of the earth by mankind; not long before the days of Abraham, and of the overspreading it with villages, towns and cities, and their growing into kingdoms, first smaller and then greater, until the rise of the monarchies of Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Media, Persia, Greece, and Rome, the first great empires on this side India. Abraham was the fifth from Peleg. So long were they of one language, one society, and one religion: and then they divided the earth, being perhaps disturbed by the rebellion of Nimrod, and forced to leave off building the tower of Babel: and from thence they spread themselves into the several countries which fell to their shares, carrying with them the laws, customs and religion, under which they had till then been educated and governed by Noah, and his sons and grandsons. And these laws were handed down to Abraham, Melchizedek and Job, and their contemporaries; and were for some time observed by the judges of the eastern country. So Job tells us, that "adultery was an heinous crime, yea an iniquity to be punished by the judges;" Job xxxi. 11. And of idolatry, he saith, "If I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking in brightness, and my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand; this also were an iniquity to be punished by the judge, for I should have denied the God that is above:" ver. 26, 27, 28.

The worship of false gods, seems to have been practised in Chaldea, and afterward to have spread every way from thence.

Several of the laws and precepts, of which the primitive religion consisted, are mentioned in the book of Job, which was the morality and religion of the first ages. This was the religion of Moses and the prophets, comprehended in the two great commandments, of loving the Lord our God with all our heart, and soul and mind, and our neighbour as ourselves.

This

This was the religion enjoined by Moses, on the uncircumcised stranger within the gates of Israel: and this is the primitive religion of both Jews and Christians, and ought to be the standing religion of all nations; it being for the honour of God, and good of mankind. The belief, that the world was framed by one supreme God, and is governed by him, and the love and worship of him, and the honouring of our parents, and the love of our neighbour as ourselves, and mercy even to brute beasts, is the oldest of all religions.

The things that have been observed above, of so late an original, of letters, agriculture, navigation, music, arts and sciences, metals, smiths and carpenters, towns and houses, &c.—and that the earth so lately was so thinly peopled, and so overgrown with woods; is an evidence, that mankind could not be much older than is represented in the scriptures.—See Newton's Chronology, from page 174 to page 190.

That we can trace the state of the world of mankind in so many things to their beginning, is an argument, that the beginning of the world of mankind itself is not very far off.—The sailing out into the ocean in large ships by the stars, may be traced to its beginning. Also the beginning of letters in Europe, the beginning of astronomy, the first calculation of eclipses, the first formation of the sphere, the finding of the length of the year to a greater and greater perfection, the beginning of philosophy, the first discovery of the bigger part of the face of the earth, the invention of the mariner's compass, the invention of printing, the invention of telescopes, microscopes, gun-powder, and innumerable other inventions and improvements of latter ages, may be pointed out; and it may be shewn, that all former ages of the world were totally destitute of them.

58. It is remarkable, that it should be ordered in providence, not only that the custom of sacrificing should

should wholly cease among the Jews, since the sacrifice of Christ has been offered; but also, that it should be so ordered, that, since that time, this custom has gradually dwindled away, and ceased among almost all nations; though it was so universal before, that there was no nation among whom the custom had not prevailed, and been established time out of mind. Mr Chamock, speaking of the custom, vol. ii. of his works, p. 12. says, "This tradition hath been superannuated, and laid aside in most parts of the world."

59. The doctrine of the day of judgment, taught in the scriptures, or the doctrine, that at the end of the world, all mankind shall stand together before the judgment-seat of the supreme, universal Lawgiver and Judge, to be judged by him; or to have all things visibly set to rights, and justice made visibly to take place with respect to all the persons, actions and affairs of the moral world, by the supreme, infinitely wise, holy, and just Head of it: I say, this doctrine is a most reasonable doctrine, and much commends itself to our belief, from the reason of the thing, on the supposition of a moral government maintained over the world of mankind, by him who created it. For this implies, that he governs the world as its lawgiver and judge, and will treat men as accountable creatures. God's moral government not only requires, that there should be divine laws, and an execution of them in rewards and punishments; but also, that both should be made visible. It is requisite, that the subject of the laws should have proper means of knowing what the laws are, by which he is obligated, and the grounds of the obligation; and that others who are his fellow subjects, should also know his obligations. For, as men are made to dwell in society, this cannot well be, without knowing each other's obligations, and being able to judge of the good or evil of each other's actions. It is likewise requisite, that the subject of the laws, should have proper

proper means of knowing the grounds of the rewards or punishments of which he is the subject, in the execution of the laws; and that it should be made manifest, to the conscience of him that is rewarded or punished, what he is rewarded or punished for, and the ground on which the Judge assigns such a retribution; and, if he see others punished or acquitted, that the ground of it should be manifested to him, that he may see the justice of it. That there should be some judicial proceeding in which that should take place, which is some way equivalent to the subject's appearing before his Lord, and being called to an account, and his actions tried and manifested, and sentence accordingly pronounced, seems absolutely necessary, in order to a proper manifestation of the grounds of the subject's reward or punishment, and a display of the justice of his judge to his own conscience; which must be, if the subject be dealt with as a rational moral agent. Hence it is of necessity, that every one of mankind must be the subject of such a dispensation of God towards him, which may fitly be called an appearing before the judgment-seat of God. And it is most reasonable to suppose, that this judicial proceeding will not be secret; that each individual will not be judged so, that the transaction with respect to him will be out of the sight and knowledge of all others; but that truth and righteousness will be made visibly to take place, after a visible prevalence of wrong, wickedness and confusion, in the violations of a divine law, which was a public law, being the law of their union and regulation in society; many of which violations are of course visible to others, and others are concerned in them, either in being united in the wickedness and accessory to it, or a party concerned in suffering the injury done by that wickedness.

Reasonable creatures are the eye of the world; they are capable of beholding the beauty and excellency of the Creator's workmanship, and so seeing those displays of himself, which the Creator has made in

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his works: and therefore it is requisite, that the beauty and excellency of the world, as God hath constituted it, should not be hid or kept secret. But the beauty of God's constitution of the world, consists mainly, without doubt, in the constitution of the intelligent part of the world, which is the head and end of all the rest, *et instar omnium*. But the beauty and order of God's constitution of this, consists chiefly in his moral regulation of it. Now, therefore, since God has made the beauty and regularity of the natural world so publicly visible to all; it is much more requisite, that the moral beauty and regularity of his disposals in the intelligent world, should be publicly visible. For the beauty of God's works consists a thousand times more in this, than in the other. It is fit, therefore, that this should not be hid and secreted, as it will be, if divine judgment, and rewards and punishments are secret. It is reasonable to suppose, that these will be as publicly visible as the brightness and beautiful order and motions of the heavenly bodies, and the regular successions of the various seasons of the year, and the beauties of nature in the air and on the face of the earth. The moral deformity and confusion of the world, is most public; it stands forth continually in view through all ages. It is therefore fit, that the rectifying of this deformity and disorder, and the bringing of light out of darkness, should also be made publicly visible to those creatures, that are made to be the eye of the creation, to behold its beauty, and the glory of the Creator in it. God has given man a nature, which, if it be under the influence of true virtue, and be not depraved, desires above all things to behold this kind of order and beauty. When man sees a great and horrid crime committed, as some nefarious act of injustice, cruelty, &c. the nature of the reasonable creature has something in it, which desires and makes it requisite, that he should see justice done, and right take place, with respect to such an act. The mind
or

or heart, as it were, fails in such a case, if it neither sees this, nor hopes to see it.

If, on such like accounts, it be requisite, that judgment should be public, and that many should stand together before the judgment-seat; on the same accounts, it will appear most reasonable to suppose, that the whole world should appear together in one great assembly, before the judgment-seat. The whole world is one commonwealth and kingdom, all made of one blood, all under one moral head, one law, and one government; and all parts of it are joined in communication one with another; all so far linked together, that all have moral concerns one with another, and are all dealt with, as is evident, even by God's common providence, in the same manner, and by the same rule, with respect to their moral state. All are sinners, and yet God appears placable to all, &c. All dwell in one habitation, viz. this earth, under the same roof of the visible heavens, having the same sun to enlighten them, &c. Besides, many of the causes and controversies to be decided by the Supreme Judge of the world, are of the most public nature; as causes between princes and heads of great kingdoms and monarchies, and their people; and causes between one nation and another. Yea, there are many causes which the Supreme Judge must bring to an issue, wherein the greater part of the world is concerned; as causes between the Roman emperors, and the world over which they ruled, wherein the emperor has been, and still is one party, and the Roman empire another. And when the cause and controversy between these two is judged, it is requisite that both parties should appear together before the judgment-seat. Yea, the concern of the Roman emperors with the world of mankind, has extended beyond the empire they ruled. They had to do with other nations that were without the limits of the empire, to the utmost ends of the earth: as with the Scythians, the Persians, the Arabians, the Indians, the Chinese, the Germans, Cimbrians and Africans.

So that it is requisite, when they appear to be judged, that not only the people of the Roman empire should appear with them, but also those other nations. And at other times, when there are no such vast monarchies subsisting, yet all nations of the earth are linked together in mutual concerns and transactions one with another. There are, therefore, many causes between them to be decided by the Supreme Judge, which require them all to be present before the judgment-seat together. Thus, all the nations of Europe have dealings one with another continually; and these European nations have some dealings with almost all other nations upon earth, in Asia, Africa, and America. The Spaniards and Portuguese have dealings with all the nations of South America: The French* and English, with almost all the nations of North America: The Spaniards, the French, the Portuguese, the Dutch and English, with the nations of the East Indies: The Muscovites and Turks, with all the nations of Asia: The Turks and Europeans, with almost all the nations of Africa.

It is therefore necessary, that all nations should be gathered together before the judgment-seat of the Supreme Lawgiver and Judge, that he, by his judgment, may determine between them, and settle all things by his wise, righteous, and infallible decision. And many of the good and evil acts that are done, though the world is not properly concerned in them as a party interested, yet are public through the world. They are done in the sight of the world, and greatly draw the attention of mankind. It is fit, therefore, that they should be as publicly judged. And, it is to be observed, that the longer the world stands, the more and more communication have the different parts of it together. So that, at the end of the world, there probably will be the highest reason, in this respect, that all nations that shall then be found

* In the Author's lifetime, the French were in the possession of *Canada and Louisiana*.

found upon the earth, should be called together before the judgment-seat of God.

As it is requisite, that all who dwell on the face of the earth at the same time, should appear together before the judgment-seat; so it is also requisite, that all generations that have succeeded one another, appear together. Many of the moral acts, both good and bad, not only are public in this respect, that they are known over great part of the face of the earth, in or near the time of them; but also they are made public to all following generations, by tradition and history. And if the actions of one generation be not visible to all, yet the actions of one generation are very visible to the generation immediately following, and theirs to the next; and so, all, in this sense, are very visible one to another. And as all nations of the world are morally concerned one with another, though not so as each one to be immediately concerned with every other nation; yet all are mutually concerned by concatenation. One nation is concerned with the next, and that with the next, and so on: So that there is need that all should appear together to be judged. All generations of men, from the beginning to the end of the world, are morally concerned one with another. The first generation is concerned with the next, and that with the next, and so on to the end of the world. Therefore, it is requisite, that all should appear together to be judged. Parents may injure their children, and children may injure their parents; and so they are two parties in one cause, which must be decided by the Supreme Judge. Therefore, it is needful, that they, as parties, should appear together, when their cause is judged. Parents and children, or a younger generation and an older, may be accessory to each other's crimes, or united in each other's virtuous deeds; and therefore, it is requisite that they should be judged together. Yea, the present generation may become accessory to an injury committed by their ancestors ages ago. For, in many things, they stand in the stead of those

ancestors, and act for them, and have power to continue the injury, or to remove it. Posterity is concerned in the actions of their ancestors or predecessors, in families, nations, and most communities of men, as standing in some respect in their stead. And some particular persons may injure, not only a great part of the world contemporary with them, but may injure and undo all future generations of many individuals, families, or larger communities. So that men who live now, may have an action against those who lived a thousand years ago: or there may be a cause which needs to be decided by the Judge of the world, between some of the present generation, and some who lived a thousand years ago. Princes who, by rapine and cruelty, ruin nations, are answerable for the poverty, slavery, and misery of the posterity of those nations. So, as to those who broach and establish opinions and principles, which tend to the overthrow of virtue, and propagation of vice, and are contrary to the common rights and privileges of mankind. Thus, Mahomet has injured all succeeding posterity, and is answerable, at least in a degree, for the ruin of the virtue of his followers in many respects, and for the rapine, violence, and terrible devastations which his followers have been guilty of toward the nations of the world, and to which they have been instigated by the principles which he taught them. And, whoever they were, who first drew away men from the true religion, and introduced and established idolatry, they have injured all nations that have to this day partaken of the infection.

In like manner, persons, by their virtue, may be great benefactors to mankind, through all succeeding generations. Without doubt, the apostle Paul, and others who assisted him, and following generations, may properly become the subjects of a judicial proceeding, with respect to that great religious change and revolution in the nations subject to the Roman empire,

empire, in abolishing heathenish idolatry, and setting up Christianity in the room of it.

The end of the divine judgment is the manifestation of the divine justice: and how fit is it, that the justice of the universal and supreme Head and Judge of all mankind, in governing his kingdom, should be most publicly manifested, and exhibited to his whole kingdom! This doctrine of the day of judgment, exceedingly becomes the universal moral Head of the world, who rules through all generations.

It is certain, that the world of mankind, in its present state in this world, will come to an end: nature, in length of time, will bring it to an end. But it is not to be supposed, that the Creator and Governor of the world will let it come to an end, in the gradual way in which nature would bring it to an end. And if an end will be put to the probationary state of the whole world of mankind, that shall then be alive, at once; their judgment of course will be at once: for judgment doubtless immediately follows the state of probation.

When the world shall come to an end, it will probably be exceedingly full of people, and a great part of the whole of the inhabitants will be alive at that time. And as then the world will probably have great intercourse one part with another, vastly beyond what it has now, so it will be peculiarly fit, that they should be judged in sight of one another.

If there shall ever come a time, wherein the Lawgiver and Judge of the world will publicly regulate the moral state of all generations, the end of the world, when there shall be a final period to all farther probation, seems to be the proper time for it. If there be ever, by divine wisdom and righteousness, to be brought about a righteous, holy, and glorious issue of the confused state of the world; it will be, when this confused world shall have come to an end. As the proper time for the judging of a particular person, is, when the probationary state of that person is at an end; so the proper time for the public judgment

ment of the world, is, when the probationary world comes to an end.

There is all reason to think, that the wicked will hereafter be punished together, having a place of punishment assigned for them, where they shall suffer divine vengeance in sight of one another: and that the righteous will also be rewarded together. If so, it is most requisite that their judgment should be together; that they may understand the ground and reason of that punishment, and of that reward, which they shall see in each other.

60. On the supposition, that God has not utterly cast off the world of mankind, it is most reasonable to suppose, that, in the time of the universal corruption of the world by idolatry, which continued for so many ages, God should choose some one people, to maintain amongst them the knowledge and the true worship of himself.

61. " Our relation to God, the maker and governor of the world, and what we have to expect from him, is essentially necessary to a just and perfect system of religion. This is self-evident: and therefore, in vain we expect such a system from human wisdom. God alone can be the author of it, as he alone can declare, whether he will pardon or punish the ungodliness and unrighteousness of mankind, which is in its own nature punishable. And if he is pleased to pardon sin, as he alone must choose, so he alone must shew us, the way his wisdom judges most proper to exercise this mercy. The reason of things, to an attentive mind, makes it evident enough, that our present being stands in relation to some future state. But, as our reason also tells us, that a character of virtue must be necessary, in order to our gaining eternal life; what man in all the world can conclude, that he has exercised such a due degree of virtue, that the Governor of the universe

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“ is obliged, in equity, to give him eternal glory;
 “ or, that he is worthy that God should put him in
 “ possession of immortality? The certain and clear
 “ discovery of that state, in its proper circumstances,
 “ is what none of the philosophers have given us,
 “ nor indeed can give us. God only can open the
 “ future world, and shew what honour and glory
 “ he has prepared for the reward of sincere virtue,
 “ and what punishment he will inflict upon incurable
 “ vice.” Taylor in the Preface to his Paraphrase on
 Romans.

62. It is most agreeable to reason, that there is a
 future state of rewards and punishment, wherein
 God will reward and make happy good men, and
 make wicked men miserable. And if there be a fu-
 ture state of happiness to God's favourites, it is ra-
 tional to suppose, that this FUTURE STATE should
 be ETERNAL: because, otherwise, God's greatest
 favourites, and those to whom God gives the great-
 est rewards in another world, would, in one respect,
 have most to torment them; to wit, the fear of death,
 the dreadful and eternal end of that sweet happiness.
 The sweeter and more happy life is, the more terri-
 ble are death and the thoughts and expectations of it.
 It is not likely that God would add such a sting to
 the sweetest enjoyments and rewards of his greatest
 favourites. It is rational, therefore, to suppose, that
 the life he gives them after death, is life eternal;
 life that is not to come to an end by another worse
 death, consisting not only in the destruction of the
 body, but the abolition of the soul. God has not
 made men like the brutes, who cannot contemplate
 futurity, and therefore, have no allay to present en-
 joyment, by the prospect of an end by death. And
 if it be so, that there be an eternal state of happiness
 in another world, set before us to be sought after:
 then, how rational are the Christian doctrines and
 precepts, of placing our affections on heavenly ob-
 jects; of weanedness from the world; of behaving as
 pilgrims.

pilgrims and strangers on the earth; of not laying up treasure on the earth, but in heaven; of selling all for the kingdom of heaven; of not looking at the things which are seen, which are temporal, but at the things which are not seen, which are eternal? Hence, also, the reasonableness of the Christian precepts of patience under sufferings, seeing these afflictions are but for a moment, in comparison with the duration of the future weight of glory.

Since the doctrine of **ORIGINAL SIN**, and the exceeding depravity and **CORRUPTION OF HUMAN NATURE**, is so agreeable to experience, and also mens obstinacy in sin and folly under all manner of means, these make the doctrine of regeneration, and the sovereign grace of God in it, exceedingly rational. And seeing the extreme stupidity of mankind is so evident, in a senselessness of the amiableness of the divine Being, of the unreasonableness and hatefulness of vice, of the reasonableness and excellency of virtue, of the reality and importance of future and eternal things; and in their expectations of happiness here, and in the value they set upon the vain things of this world: hence, how rational is the doctrine of divine **ILLUMINATION**; of the **TEACHINGS** of **GOD'S SPIRIT**, opening the blind eyes, turning from darkness to light, taking away the heart of stone, and giving an heart of flesh, &c.?

Since reason teaches that a divine revelation is peculiarly necessary to teach us a way of reconciliation with God, after we have offended him by sin; since this depends on God's sovereign pleasure, and the strength and clearness of reason do not at all help to the discovery of it; therefore, it is more reasonable to suppose, that when a divine revelation is given, it should be very much taken up about this, to wit, about **THE WAY OF A SINNER'S RECONCILIATION TO GOD, THE JUSTIFICATION OF A SINNER**; and that this should be very much **THE SUBJECT OF THAT BIBLE**, which contains the divine revelation to mankind. Since experience teaches,

teaches, that mankind, in general, is in a fallen and exceedingly depraved state, and since there are many things also, whence it may be argued, that God has not utterly cast off mankind; but that he is reconcilable to sinful man; and that, therefore, there must be a revelation of the way of reconciliation: since it is also evident, that all mankind are not actually reconciled, and comparatively but few; inasmuch as there are but few good men, and most remain wicked: and since reason teaches that there must be a future eternal state of rewards for the good; and that there must be some revelation to ascertain and declare this, that this reward may properly be set before men, as God's promise, and an enforcement of God's commands, and certain encouragement to the good, under the difficulties and sufferings they meet with in the way of virtue: it is also very rational to suppose, that God, in this revelation, would appoint, that those who are gathered out of this corrupt, polluted world, and, being brought to true virtue, are reconciled to God, and are interested in the eternal happiness of another world, should be UNITED in one HOLY SOCIETY or CHURCH. For, in this moral state, they are greatly distinguished and separated from the rest of the world: they are united in so great and infinitely important an interest, wherein the rest of the world have no concern with them; they must needs, by their virtue and piety, be greatly united in affection, and are disposed to withdraw from the rest of the world, and unite themselves one to another in a society by themselves, for mutual interest and assistance in their common concerns, their great business of the service of God, and their great interest; they are all pilgrims and strangers on earth, and they all belong to one country, are of one kindred, the children of one heavenly Father, and are engaged as soldiers to oppose the same enemies, the vices that prevail in the world, to promote the same kingdom, to wit, the reign of virtue. If the Most High, by his gracious dispensations, bring out a
number

number of virtuous holy ones, out of this corrupt miserable world, by a revelation of his will, so that virtue and goodness shall have an interest established and maintained in the world; it is fit it should have a *visible* interest; and, to that end, that the virtuous and good should be gathered into a visible society.

How reasonable is the scripture doctrine of ONE GOD, and of the other invisible heavenly beings that are concerned in the affairs of the government of the world! Though these beings be of very great power and exalted dignity, and different degrees and orders, having a diverse superintendency over the various parts of God's creation, and over the affairs of mankind in particular, and over different countries and kingdoms; and so may be called thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers: yet all those are his ANGELS, his mere servants, in perfect dependence on him, and subjection to him, employed as ministers of his kingdom, servants employed by him in the administration of the affairs of his dominion; and those that are to fulfil and execute his will; and so, that all divine adoration belongs to him alone. How much more rational is this, than the old heathen notions of a multiplicity of gods, or heavenly beings, who were the joint objects of trust, dependence, and divine adoration? It is evident to reason, that there is but one eternal, self-existent, independent, infinite Being; and that all other beings are his creatures, wholly receive their being from him, and are upheld in being by him, and so are infinitely below him, and are universally and perfectly dependent on him. It is evident to reason, that the whole creation is all the fruit of one single power, and of one wisdom, the contrivance of one design; and that the same design that contrived the whole for certain ends, governs it to those ends, and continually orders and manages all the affairs of it to fulfil the purposes for which he contrived things in his creation. And therefore, none of the inferior beings, who are all God's creatures, can properly, in any respect, be
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looked upon, or respected, as fellow-governors of the world with the Supreme Being. They are not his assistants in governing the world; their power does not at all help him. They are not his counsellors: he is not assisted by their wisdom: their contrivance and design are not joined with his. And therefore, it is reasonable, that they should not be sharers with him in our adorations, trust, and devotion of mind, and dedication of ourselves. In our adoration, reliance and supplications, we are to have respect to him whose will governs and disposes, and not to others, whose design, wisdom, and will, are not joined with him, and whose wisdom and will is as dependent on the Supreme Being as ours; and who need the divine favour, and the help of the divine wisdom and will, as much as we; and who are as much in his hands, and at his disposal; are fellow-creatures, at an equal distance from the Creator; as entirely and absolutely dependent as fellow-subjects and fellow-servants; as much under authority and command; are fellow-worshippers, that should worship with as much humility; and who can do us no good, but as servants and instruments of the Supreme Being: so that all the benefit we have by them, is his kindness. If we are to adore those fellow-creatures, and pray to them, and make humble supplications to them, and offer praises to them, and so forth, as well as to the Supreme Being; How is there any proportionable or suitable distinction maintained, in the respect we show to them and him? And besides, it is not reasonable that we should make these inferior beings the objects of adoration, invocation, and praise; for we do not know them; we do not know who they are. If any of them have the special care or charge of us, of our families, cities, or nation, we do not know who they are, nor what care they have of us; what power they have with respect to us; what subordinate dependence we have on them; what benefits we have received from them; or what they can do for us. Nor can we know how far their

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knowledge

knowledge extends ; whether they know our wants and desires ; or whether they hear us when we pray to them, or praise them. As the Supreme Being has made the world, so he has made us. As he is the author of the whole system of the visible universe, so he is the author of us, who are the head and the end of this system, to which the other creatures of this system are subjected, and for which they are evidently made, contrived and ordered. He is the author of the frame of our bodies, and the father of our souls, the author of their faculties ; and he is our preserver and governor ; and we live, move, and have our being in him. He is evidently our moral governor, as reason plainly teaches ; and we are absolutely dependent on him. His power and wisdom are employed in subserviency to his design and will ; and it is he that orders all events concerning us. If he governs the rest of the system, in a more special manner does he govern us, and dispose all things that concern us, that are the head and end of this system. Therefore, none of our fellow-creatures should share with him, in our adoration, self-dedication, dependence, prayer and praise.

The doctrine of the gospel concerning ANOTHER and an INVISIBLE WORLD, to which good men are to be transferred, and where they are to have their inheritance and fixed abode, is most rational on this account, that it is manifest that this visible world is corruptible in its own nature. Such is the nature and constitution of it, that it must come to an end. And it is unreasonable to suppose, that the Creator would leave it gradually to perish, languishing in a decayed, broken, miserable state, through thousands of ages, gradually growing more and more wretched, before it is quite destroyed. Therefore, it is reasonable to suppose, that there will be a time wherein its Creator will immediately interpose, to put the world to an end, and destroy it suddenly. And at that time, all the living inhabitants of the world, that are not taken from it and translated to some other abode, must

must perish, and be destroyed in a very awful manner, by the immediate hand of God, with most inexpressible manifestations of his mighty power and great majesty; which will have infinitely more dreadful appearances of divine wrath and fury, than is in the most terrible thunder-storms, or earthquakes. And who can believe, that at that time, when God, in this manner immediately interposes, he will make no distinction between the good and virtuous, that are his favourites, and his enemies? That this awful destruction and great wrath shall come upon all alike? There will be no necessity of it from the course of nature. For at that time, by the supposition, God will put an end to the course of nature. God will immediately and miraculously interpose. The whole affair shall be miraculous, and by God's immediate hand; and therefore, a miraculous deliverance of the good, will not be at all beside God's manner of operation at this time. He can as easily, and, without departing any more from the stated course of things, miraculously deliver the virtuous, as he can miraculously destroy the wicked. Therefore, we may well suppose, that at that time, when God is about to put an end to the frame of this visible universe, the virtuous will be translated into some other world, now invisible, and beyond the limits of the visible world. And if God designs thus to deal with all the good that shall be found alive on the earth at that time, how rational is it to suppose, that he deals in like manner with the good in all generations? That they all are translated into that distant invisible world? Without doubt, the world into which God will receive his favourites, when this corruptible world shall perish, shall be incorruptible. He will not translate them from one corruptible world to another. He will not do so great a thing, as to save them from one world that is to perish, to carry them to another world that is to perish. Therefore, they shall be immortal, and have eternal life: and, doubtless, that world will be unspeakably better than this,

and free from all that destruction, that fleeting, fading, perishing, empty nature, that attends all the things of this world; and their bodies shall be immortal, and as secure from perishing, as the world is, to which they are translated.

This makes it most reasonable to suppose, that good men, in all ages, are translated to this world. For why should so vast a difference be made, between the virtuous that shall be of the last generation, and the virtuous of all preceding generations, that the former should be so distinguished from the wicked, and so preserved, when the wicked perish, and should be received to a state of such pure, glorious, and eternal happiness; and the virtuous of all preceding generations perish with the rest of the world, having no distinction in their death; but be equally exposed to the fearful ravages death makes in all its terrible forms, from generation to generation, and equally exposed to the calamities of life while they live. Seeing there is a far distant and invisible world provided for some of the virtuous inhabitants of this world; it is reasonable to suppose, that all the good shall have their habitation and inheritance together there, as one society, partaking of the same reward; as they were of the same race of mankind, and loved and served God, and followed him in the same state here below, in the performance of the same duties, the same work, and under like trials and difficulties. It is also, hence, rational to suppose, that there should be a **RESURRECTION** of the bodies of the saints of all past generations. For, from what has been observed before, the bodies of the saints of the last generation, will be preserved from perishing with the world, and will be translated. And, doubtless, if all the good of all generations, are to have a like reward, and are to dwell together in the same world in one society; they shall be in a like state, partaking of a like reward.

Corollary. Hence there must be some notice given of this invisible world of rewards to mankind on earth :—

earth : and what way is so rational, as by **DIVINE REVELATION**, or by God's testimony and promise ? And how reasonably is full credit to God's testimony, and dependence on his promise, required ? And so, **LIVING BY FAITH**, and not by sight, is reasonably required of all the heirs of the inheritance.

“ It is meet this judgement should be conspicuous, public, and solemn. As men have been openly good or bad, so it is proper they should meet with a public retribution. Men have sinned in privacy ; have covered their lusts, their murders, their rapines, injustice, and cruelties, with secrecy ; and have been instigated to their villanies, by hope of impunity. It is meet they should be disappointed, and have their enormities brought to light. The religious have been clandestinely so. Their prayers and alms, their penitence, humility, faith and patience, have been chiefly known to the Father of spirits. Hypocrites have been passed for saints, and faithful worshippers have been stigmatized as hypocrites and villains. It is meet there be a day of detection, that persons, and hearts, and actions, should be laid open, and a public discrimination made, betwixt him that served God, and him that served him not.” Religion of Jesus delineated, page 118.

The reasonableness of that doctrine, that **JESUS CHRIST** is appointed **JUDGE** of the world, is represented in the following passage : “ The Son of God has come, and dwelt in this world of ours. He has come upon the high errand and office of an eternal redemption, in order to an eternal salvation. Here he was egregiously vilified and slighted ; his person, and ministry, and works, reproached and rejected. Here he was ranked with notorious criminals ; sceptered and crowned in scorn ; barbarously nailed and hanged on the cross, and ignominiously dispatched out of the world : And yet, at the same time, he was Lord of life and glory. He purchased the world into his own hand, has died and rose, and lives again, to be

" Lord of the dead and of the living. He is capable
 " of judging the world in righteousness. He knows
 " all persons, all hearts and minds; and all transac-
 " tions of the world from the beginning to the end.
 " Reason, then, and equity, will dictate, that he
 " should be the judge. It is meet that he should be
 " publicly seen, that was so little known while he
 " was here. It is fit the world should see who it
 " was they have despised and disregarded, who it
 " was that came to redeem the world, and be sa-
 " crificed for the life of it. It is meet he should
 " come to acknowledge his friends, and give them
 " leave to rejoice in him; to call his implacable ad-
 " versaries to an account, and render vengeance to
 " those that would not obey him. It is meet that
 " every eye should see him, even they that pierced
 " him, and trampled upon his blood, and would not
 " be saved thereby. Accordingly, this judgement
 " has the Father committed to the Son, that he may
 " right himself, and vindicate his cause, and teach
 " men to honour the Son as they honour the Father.
 " All hearts, and wills, and knees, will be ready to
 " bow to him in that day." Religion of Jesus deli-
 neated, p. 118. 119.

It is reasonable to suppose, that if God should
 give to man a revelation, to teach him what virtue is
 suitable for such a creature as man, in his exceeding-
 ly corrupt, broken, miserable state; and what virtue
 and religion would be acceptable to God; and to
 teach the way to the happiness of such a creature: I
 say, it is reasonable to suppose, that he should teach
 a different kind of virtue, consisting in a different sort
 of frame and exercise of heart, from the virtue which
 philosophers teach from their own reason.

The reasonableness of the doctrine of the resurrec-
 tion will appear, if we suppose, that an union with
 a body is the most rational state of perfection of the
 human soul: which may be argued from the consi-
 deration, that this was the condition in which the
 human soul was created at first, and that its separa-
 tion from the body is no improvement of its condi-
 tion,

tion; being an alteration brought on by "sin, and"
 "was inflicted on the transgressions under the notion
 "of evil, and expressly as punishment, upon the
 "forfeiture of a privilege. From whence we must
 "conclude, that the former state of union to the
 "body, was a better state than the disunion which
 "was threatened. Sin introduced that death that
 "consists in the separation of body and soul. The
 "state of innocency was embodied: the state of
 "guilt was disembodied." Winder's History of
 Knowledge, p. 59. 60.

Therefore, as Christ came to restore from all the calamities which came from sin, it is most reasonable to suppose, that he will restore the union of soul and body.

How reasonable to suppose, that the salvation of the Messiah, which was to be a general salvation of mankind, should not be from particular evils or enemies, as the redemption of one particular nation from Egypt or Babylon; but the general enemies and evils of all mankind, and the general foundations and authors of all their evils, as Sin and Satan.

The reason and fitness of CHRIST'S APPEARING in the world in so LOW AND MEAN A CONDITION, appears from this, "That his state should
 "be such as it was in the world, agreed best with
 "the end of his coming, and of the religion which
 "he was to institute. Certainly, if he had come with
 "an intention to establish himself as an earthly monarch, he ought to have made his appearance in
 "the world with very different furniture. But his
 "kingdom was not of this world. He came to reign
 "over the minds of men, not their bodies. He came
 "to call the attention of men from earthly things,
 "and to raise it to heavenly objects. He came to
 "teach the most difficult virtues, repentance, meekness, patience under injuries, &c. Finally, he
 "came to reconcile us to God, and to abolish sin, by
 "the sacrifice of himself. These ends could not be
 "obtained in any other way, than by his humble state
 "in

"in life, and his ignominious death." Alphonſus Turrettine.

That if God intended to be gracious to mankind, who are apparently become corrupt and miſerable; if he deſigned any ſuch thing in a reſtoration: it is analogous to what is apparently God's manner in his providence, that he ſhould appoint ſome **PARTICULAR PERSON** to be the **SAVIOUR** and the inſtrument of ſo great good. It is evident, that it has ever been God's manner, in other caſes, to beſtow the greateſt public benefits by particular perſons: Theſe have been the inſtruments of deliverance from great public calamities, as from the oppreſſion of enemies, and of raiſing nations and great communities to great worldly wiſdom, honour, and proſperity. Inſtances from ſacred hiſtory we have in Noah, Joſeph, Moſes, the Judges in Iſrael, David, Solomon, Hezekiah, Joſiah, Cyrus, Mordecai: and from profane hiſtory, Cyrus, Alexander, the Roman conquerors, Czar Peter the Great, the men that were deified among the heathens, and many others. Though true virtue be eſſentially the ſame in all, the ſame in mankind before and after the fall, the ſame in all intelligent creatures, both men and angels: yet the leading exerciſe of true virtue may differ, according to the different nature, ſtate, and circumſtances of the creature, the different relation it ſtands in to God, and its different leading concern with its Creator, and the diverſe principal means and manner of God's manifeſting himſelf to the creature, and the different intercourſe he maintains with it. And, if theſe things are conſidered, it will appear reaſonable every way, that **FAITH** ſhould be the leading virtue of fallen man, a ſubject of the ſalvation of Jeſus Chriſt, or candidate for it; to whom God principally makes himſelf known by the goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt.

Virtue is eſſentially the ſame in men and women, in parents and children; yet the leading exerciſes of relative virtue may differ in theſe, by reaſon of difference of nature, ſtate, circumſtances, and relation.

Thus,

Thus, considering the weakness and dependence of the wife, and her relation to her husband, as her head, her guide, defence, provider, and husband; those exercises of virtue peculiarly proper for her, and amiable in her, in her circumstances, and peculiarly endearing to her husband, are, a chaste reservation of herself for him, meek submission, and resignation of herself to him, and affiance in him. On the other hand, the proper leading exercises of virtue in him, and most endearing him to her, are, fortitude, generosity, tenderness, compassion, &c. So the leading relative virtues of a child in minority, are, submission and dependence: But of the father, parental tenderness, watchful care, &c.

And nothing is more plain, than that the most proper and suitable leading exercises of every kind, rank, and state of beings, is to be determined from the particular nature, state, circumstances, connections and relations, in which they stand with respect to the chief objects of duty. For state and relation bring duty, and are the ground of particular obligations and determinations of virtue; and therefore, according as state and relation are different, so will the determinations of the leading exercises of virtue be different.

Now, whatever is considered in the nature and circumstances of fallen man, under the gospel of salvation by the Son of God; every thing will shew, that FAITH, or cordial belief in the Son of God, and dependence on him, is certainly the most proper leading exercise of virtue for us.

This will appear, if we consider what is most affecting, and most to be attended to in our present fallen circumstances, being sinful, miserable, weak, poor, helpless, unworthy and lost. This will also appear, if we consider the leading character and relation under which God now reveals himself to us, thus sinful, miserable, helpless creatures, even that of our Saviour. And the grand affair, in regard to which is our chief concern with God, is salvation. And
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that notion, under which chiefly all those benefits wherein our happiness consists is exhibited, is salvation, and benefits that are spiritual, and chiefly unseen and future. This will also further appear, if we consider, that the way, manner, and principal means by which God makes himself known to us in our fallen state, and the only means by which he manifests himself to us in the fore-mentioned character and relation, and makes known those mentioned benefits wherein our happiness consists, and directs us in answerable conduct and behaviour, is divine revelation or the word of God.

63. It strongly argues, that when God gave the **OLD TESTAMENT**, he intended some further and far more glorious revelation of his mind and will, that in the Old Testament, are so many hints of another world, and a future, eternal state of rewards and punishment; and yet, that these things are no where spoken more plainly, and insisted upon more fully, particularly and didactically. For, if there be such a state, doubtless the things of it are infinitely greater than the things of the present state; and the things that concern it are infinitely more important than the things of this world. The things of that future eternal state must be the grand things of all, to which the religious concerns of this life must all be subordinate; and in comparison with which, temporal things are nothing.

This argues, that a then future, far more plain and clear revelation of the chief things of religion, and of the greatest concern between God and man, was in reserve.

64. It is an argument, that Moses spoke and acted, not of himself, but as being divinely led and instructed, that the doctrine that he taught, so far excelled the doctrine even of the wisest of the heathens. It is not credible, that a man born and educated in the midst

midst of Egyptian superstition, should know and teach those things of himself.

He clearly taught those things, which, to the Gentiles, appeared as things attended with the greatest uncertainty and perplexity, and which were most remote from their hypotheses. For he shews, that the origin of the world was from one God, the Creator of heaven and earth; concerning which the Gentiles inquired with great anxiety, but never could find where to set their foot.

The things which he taught concerning God, were perfectly agreeable to reason; yet exceedingly remote from the notions, even of the most learned and polite of other nations, who taught things concerning God so mean and vile, that they were altogether unworthy of the Supreme Being. This is the singular nature of the Jewish doctrine, and a truly divine character, that it wholly tends to God: it every where favours of God: it magnifies and exalts God: and, in one word, it wholly, in every thing that appertains to it, is fitted for, and tends to the glory of God. And by this note, this doctrine is evidently distinguished from all human doctrines. For, in all the doctrines of men, you may see them seeking their own glory. You may see that they accommodate the doctrines they deliver, to the dispositions and manners of great men, and men in power. But this has entirely respect to God; God is the scope and end of all things; God is concerned in all things, sees all things, directs all things, works all: all things are directed to his glory alone.

Who is there that would assert him to be an impostor, who refers every thing, not to himself, but to God alone?

And, if Moses did not receive his doctrine from God, which way in the world should it come to pass, that a people, noted for their rude and uncultivated state, and despised very much by other nations, as remarkably inferior for ingenious arts, politeness of manners, and ignorant of philosophy and the sciences, should,

should, nevertheless, so vastly excel all nations in their notions of divine subjects, and alone should have right sentiments in questions of the most sublime and exalted nature? And with respect to the laws of Moses, they were by no means formed in such a manner as was to be expected, if what Moses aimed at was to found a republic by fraud, and thereby thoroughly to subject the Jewish people to himself. For they that make use of imposture, are wont to accommodate themselves to the dispositions of the people, or, at least, not to militate against those dispositions of theirs, that are strongest of all, and which have possessed their minds from their youth, and by long custom. So Mahomet, when he founded a new religion, patched it with such precepts, as were agreeable to the genius of most people in his time; and was careful to indulge even the carnal affections and passions of men, that the effeminate Asiatics might find such things in the religion he established, as might satisfy their lusts.

But the people of Israel were so propense to idolatry, as abundantly appears from the whole Mosaic history, and their other ancient monuments; that it appears to have been next to impossible for him to restrain them from it, by the strictest laws, and most severe punishments.

Yet Moses alone, though he himself was educated in idolatry, undertakes so great a work, as entirely to banish idolatry from a people so-exceedingly given to it, and encompassed round on every-side with idolaters. But who can persuade himself, that he ever had power to do this of himself, of his own head, and by his own power, without any divine direction, command, or assistance? If he was an impostor, why did not he indulge the people in that matter, that he might get their favour? Or, Why did he not at least content himself with changing the idolatry into another form, that he might, in some degree, gratify the disposition of the Hebrews? The other moral precepts of the laws of Moses are so formed, that they every-where

where inculcate the most sincere love and fear of God, and most strictly require every duty towards our neighbour. And not only fornication and other sins of that kind, (which were looked upon as mere trifles among the nations), were proscribed by the most severe threatenings; but also all internal concupiscence, which does not so much as attempt to break forth into act, is condemned by the most sacred precepts.

And this law requires even the circumcision of the heart, or an entire extirpation of evil affections; and does not so much as allow any gratification of evil desires, even in the least things.

And Moses's laws, from the beginning, were so perfect, that they never needed to be changed for the better; but were contrived with such wisdom from the beginning, although it was in times of the greatest rudeness, that they were brought at once to the utmost height of their perfection, which never happens in human laws. And for this reason, those laws were never changed, which yet is very frequently wont to happen to all laws merely human.

All these things do abundantly shew, that Moses had the characters, not of an impostor, but of a divine messenger.

These things from Alphonsus Turretine.

65. It adds to the evidence which is given to the truth of Christianity, by the multitude of miracles wrought by Christ and his apostles and followers in the first century, that there were no pretences of inspiration, or miracles, among the Jews (at least none worth the taking notice of) in Judea, or any other part of the world.

If all that multitude, and that long continued series of miracles, recorded to be wrought in confirmation of Christianity, were fictions, vain pretences, or enthusiastic whims and imaginations; why were there no pretences or imaginations of the same sort, on the other side, among the Jews, in opposition to
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these? Those of the Jews that were opposed to Christianity, were vastly the greater part of the nation. And they had as high an opinion of the honourableness of those gifts of prophecy and miracles, as Christians. They had as much in their notions and tempers, to lead them to a fondness for the claim of such an honour to their party. They were exceedingly proud and haughty, proud of their special relation to God, and of their high privilege as the peculiar favourites of heaven; and, in this respect, were exalted far above Christians, and all the world: which is a temper of mind (as we see abundantly) above all others, leading men to pretences of this nature, and leading them to the height of enthusiasm.

There could be nothing peculiar in the constitution of the first Christians, arising from a different blood, peculiarly tending in them to enthusiasm, beyond the rest of the Jews: For they were of the same blood, the same race and nation. Nor could it be because they wanted zeal against Christianity, and a desire to oppose, and destroy it; or wanted envy and great and virulent opposition of mind, to any pretences in the Christians to excel them in the favour of God, or excellency of any gifts or privileges whatsoever. They had such zeal and such envy, even to madness and fury.

The true reason, therefore, why so vast a multitude of miracles were said, and believed, to be openly wrought among Christians, for so long a time, even for a whole age, and none among the Jews, must be, that such was the nature and state of things in the world of mankind, especially in that age, that it was not possible to palm false pretences of such a kind upon the world; and that those who were most elated with pride, and most ambitious of such an honour, could see no hope of succeeding in any such pretences; and because the Christians indeed were inspired, and were enabled to work miracles, and did work them, as was pretended and believed, in great multitudes, and this continually for so long a time. But
God

God never favoured their adversaries with such a privilege.

66. It is, of itself, a great proof of revealed religion, that the Jews should, for so many ages, retain the knowledge of the true God, and notions of him, his nature, attributes, works and worship, agreeable to the most refined reason, when all the other nations about them, and all the rest of the world, were enveloped in the grossest idolatry. It was not owing to any thing peculiar in the genius of that people, any distinguishing taste they had for learning beyond other nations. They were unacquainted with the sciences that were in vogue in Greece and Rome, and seemed to have been as prone to idolatry in themselves, as other nations.

67. The slow progress the world makes in the investigation of truth, in things that seem pretty obvious; as in the instance of the roundness of the earth; may evince the necessity of a revelation to guide men into the knowledge of truth in divine things that are needful to be known, in order to our being happy in the knowledge, favour, and enjoyment of God.

68. God, in Exodus iv. at the beginning, when Moses objected, that perhaps the people would not believe that he had sent him, directed him to work two miracles to convince them: first, the transmutation of his rod to and from a serpent; and, secondly, the making his hand leprous, and healing the leprosy. And it is to be noted, that the preference is given to the last miracle, as being especially what might well be regarded as a good evidence of Moses's divine mission; ver. 8. "And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe thee, neither hearken to the voice of the first sign, that they will believe the voice of the latter sign." By which it is manifest, that such a sort of miracles as Christ wrought, and which he most abounded in, viz. his healing the bodies of

men when diseased, were a proper and good evidence of a divine mission. See, here, Kidder's Demonstration, part ii. p. 5.

Moses tells Pharaoh, Exodus viii. 10. "The frogs shall be removed, that thou mayest know that there is none like the Lord our God." The magicians could bring up frogs, but not remove them. They brought plagues, but took away none. But if the driving out the frogs was such an evidence of the distinguishing power of the Almighty; how much more the driving out devils from the bodies and souls of men, silencing their oracles, turning them out of their temples, and out of those who used curious arts, as at Ephesus, and afterwards abolishing their worship through the Roman empire?

For the gods that were worshipped in the heathen world, were devils, by the testimony of the Old Testament, Psal. cvi. 37.; and even by the testimony of the writings of Moses, Deuteronomy xxxii. 17., and Leviticus xvii. 7.; which last place calls the idols of Egypt, devils. Christ, by the prevailing of the Christian religion, cast out those devils out of that very land of Egypt. And which was the greatest work? to drive the frogs out of Egypt, or to drive out the impure spirits that were the gods of Egypt? It is spoken of, Isa. xix. 1., as a glorious manifestation of the majesty of God, that he should ride on a swift cloud, and should come into Egypt, and the idols of Egypt should be moved at his presence. See also Jeremiah xliii. 12. But when Christ came into Egypt in the preaching of his gospel, he moved, dispossessed and banished the idols of Egypt, and abolished them out of the world. And not only did Christ thus drive away the devils, the false gods, out of Egypt, but out of all the nations round about Canaan, that were known by the Israelites, or that we read of in the Old Testament, even to the utmost extent of the then known heathen world, and far beyond it. These gods were by Christ dispossessed of their ancient tenements, which they had holden age after age,

age, time out of mind. They were utterly abolished; so that they have had no worshippers now for a great many ages, no temples, no sacrifices, no honours done them. They are old, obsolete things now, utterly disregarded in the world.

It is abundantly spoken of in the Old Testament, as a future glorious work of God, greatly manifesting his power and majesty, that he should prevail against, and destroy the gods of the heathens, and abolish their worship. But our Jesus has the honour of this glorious work.

Again, when Korah and his company charged Moses and Aaron with taking too much upon them, Moses says, Numbers xvi. 5. "To-morrow, the Lord will shew who are his, and who is holy, and will cause him to come near unto him; even him whom he hath chosen, will he cause to come near unto him." And again, ver. 28, 29, 30. "Hereby ye shall know that the Lord hath sent me to do all these works; for I have not done them of my own mind: if these men die the common death of all men," &c. If the miraculous taking away of mens' lives, be so great an evidence of Moses and Aaron's divine mission, and of their being holy, and chosen and appointed of God, how much more is raising men from the dead an evidence of the same? Which is the greatest work? to take away mens lives, or to restore them to life after they are dead; or, indeed, miraculously to save them from death, when they are sick with mortal diseases? Again: God's causing the earth to open and swallow up those wicked men, is no more an evidence of a divine hand, than Christ's preventing the sea from swallowing up those that were in the ship, by immediately quieting the winds and sea by a word speaking, when the ship was even covered with waves, through the violence of the tempest: At another time, upholding Peter from sinking and being swallowed up by the tempestuous sea, when walking on the water. Elisha's causing iron to swim, is mentioned, in the Old Testament, as a great miracle.

But this was not greater than Christ's own walking on the water, and causing Peter to walk upon it.

When Elijah had restored to life the widow's son, she says upon it, 1 Kings xvii. 24. "By this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth, is truth." But this sort of miracles Christ wrought, besides rising from the dead himself.

Let Christ's feeding the multitude with a few loaves and fishes, be compared with Elisha's miracle in 2 Kings iv. 42, 43, 44.; and also that miracle recorded in the same chapter, ver. 1,—7. Curing the leprosy of Naaman, is one of the most celebrated of Elisha's miracles. The king of Israel speaks of healing the leprosy, as a peculiar work of God, 2 Kings v. 7. Naaman himself was convicted by it, that the God of Israel was the only true God.

Moses speaks of God's stilling the tempest in Egypt, and causing the thunder and hail to cease, as that which will convince Pharaoh, that the earth was the Lord's, Exodus ix. 29. Then, by parity of reason, Christ's stilling the tempest, and causing the winds and seas to obey him, is an evidence, that the earth and seas were his. Moses, to convince the people of his divine mission, took some of the water of the river, and poured it out on the dry land, and it was turned to blood; Exod. vii. 17,—20. But this was not a greater work, nor so glorious, as Christ's turning water into wine.

Abraham's conquering the four kings and their armies, with his armed servants and confederates, perhaps five or six hundred in all, is celebrated in scripture, as a glorious work of God, and a remarkable evidence of the sovereignty and absolute supremacy of Jehovah, or of his being the First and the Last; Isaiah xli. 1, 7. And in a peculiar manner the victory of Jehovah therein, over the false gods of the conquered nations, is celebrated.

It greatly affected Melchizedek, king of Salem, and convinced him, that Abraham was God's chosen friend;

friend; chosen, that he and his posterity might be blessed as God's people. But what is this to Jesus's conquering the world in its greatest strength; and, when united under that, which by the prophet Daniel is represented, as the greatest, and by far the strongest monarchy, by his handful of poor, weak, illiterate disciples?

Christ's victory over the false gods of the nations, in this conquest, was far more conspicuous, as the opposition was to them; the strife was more directly with them; the thing professedly sought, and aimed at by Christ in the conflict, was the utter destruction of these false gods, the entire rooting of them out, and the abolition of their worship out of the world: and such a victory as this was obtained; those false gods were forsaken, their oracles silenced, their temples destroyed, their images every where burnt, and their remembrance made to cease; so that now, for many ages, they have not been remembered, any otherwise, than as instances of the great blindness and folly of their votaries.

And it is further to be observed, that, in that xli. chapter of Isaiah, this very victory of Abraham is spoken of, as a representation of this great victory of the Messiah over the idols of the nations.

Elisha's smiting the army of the Syrians with blindness, is mentioned as a great miracle, 2 Kings. vi. 18. &c. But, opening the eyes of the blind, as Christ did, is a much greater miracle.

Moses and other prophets wrought many miracles, whereby they brought great judgments on men; but miracles of the beneficent kind were ever noted in the church of God, as greater, and more distinguishing of a divine hand, than of the contrary kind. See Pool's synopsis on Exodus vii. 12.

How often are the miracles wrought in Egypt, spoken of as clear evidences, that he that wrought them, was the Supreme God, and the only True God; Exodus vii. 3, 4, 5; chapter viii. 10, 19, 22; chapter

chapter ix. 14, 29.; chapter x. 2.; chapter xi. 7.
chapter xii. 12; chapter xiv. 18.

The work of Gideon in conquering the Midianites and the multitudes that were joined with them, by three hundred men, with the light of lamps and found of trumpets, is celebrated as a great work of God's power, Judges vi. 14. and vii. 2. 7. But this is but a mere type of Christ's conquering the world by the preaching of the gospel. This victory over Midian, is spoken of in scripture, as representing the conquests of the Messiah, Isaiah ix. 4.

69. It is a great argument that JESUS is the TRUE MESSIAH, that he is the person that has actually brought life and immortality to light; which is so agreeable to reason, and so agreeable to the innumerable dark hints given in the Old Testament: that he hath declared, with great plainness of speech, a future state of rewards and punishments, as is most rational, and agreeable to the nature of true religion and virtue, tending most properly to promote these things, according to what is taught by the reason of mankind, in its best improvement, and as it appeared in the wisest philosophers, and by the word of God delivered in the Old Testament; which shew how essential to true virtue and religion are weanedness from the riches, pleasures, and honours of this world, and a readiness to lay down our lives for God, &c.; and to place our happiness in God, in the knowledge of him, in union and communion with him, and conformity to him, and dwelling with him. It is exceedingly manifest from reason, and the Old Testament, that such a state of future rewards and punishments is appointed by the great moral Governor of the world, and that these rewards and punishments are the grand sanction of the divine law, and of all God's commands; and consequently, that it must be in God's design, some time or other, plainly to reveal them to the world, and not always to keep them
hid,

hid, as it were, behind a veil. But Jesus is, in effect, the person, that has brought to light, such a future state as reason says there is; and as we, now being taught by Jesus, can see to have been hinted often in the Old Testament, and has actually brought it to be the received doctrine among mankind; received by all the Christian nations of the world, as one of the most fundamental articles of their faith and religion; and as that which is plainly exhibited without a vain conjecture, and made evident beyond controversy, and fully established among his followers.

Seeing this was to be done, and seeing God had a design to bring these things thus to light at last, and he had forborne for so many ages; there is the greatest reason to suppose, that it was to be done by the Messiah, who is prophesied of as God's greatest prophet and teacher, and as the light of the world, who should bring glad-tidings; who should most clearly reveal the divine law and covenant; and publish good tidings and salvation. It was foretold, that eternal life should be a benefit of the Messiah's kingdom. Our Jesus is the person that has most plainly and rationally taught the doctrines of the resurrection and general judgment; and fully introduced and established these doctrines, agreeably to the hints and prophecies of the Old Testament.

It is a great evidence, that Jesus is the Messiah; that he hath abolished the ceremonial law, and introduced a spiritual, rational service, fit for all nations; which, reason and the Old Testament shew plainly, was a thing to be done by the Messiah.

It is a great argument that Jesus is the Messiah, that there is such a correspondence between him, what he did and suffered, the doctrine he taught, the administration he introduced, and the types of the Old Testament. It is plain, these types did mainly point to the Messiah, and were to be fulfilled in him; and it is evident, that they were remarkably fulfilled in Jesus.

70. The substance of what follows, is taken from the Preface to the Religion of Jesus delineated, page 11, &c.

All having sinned, and incurred the divine displeasure, it was needful the philosopher should say, and shew, what hope or expectation he has of the divine favour and forgiveness. For, if there be no forgiveness with God, I am afraid there will be no religion. The philosopher's light will be but small, if he cannot descry the iniquity and rebellion of human nature against God : and it will, I fear, be a false light, if it does not descry, that iniquity and rebellion against the infinite God, the Creator and Preserver of all things, is an unmeasurable evil and indignity. He must not be an infinite God, as he is confessed to be, whose displeasure and punitive power are not dreaded, and whose pardon and favour are not most highly valued.

If there is no prospect of pardon and reconciliation, despair sure will prevent repentance, and consequently religion : as also the wrath of the Almighty will blast the soul, and deny the means, or a blessing on the means, that are to lead us to repentance.

We should be pleased now to hear, what such a rational philosopher has to say, in the discovery and assurance of divine forgiveness.

The pardon that is indulged by a mortal prince, is an act of grace ; much more must the forgiveness of the Supreme Governor of the world be so. How then the light of nature, or law of reason, will assure us of a free, gracious act of the eternal God, let the rationalist judge.

If the light of nature proclaims to the world forgiveness of sin, we should suppose that it is either a total or partial forgiveness. If it is only a partial forgiveness, then, though we sit under the patience and forbearance of God at present, though we enjoy sun and rain, and fruitful seasons in this world, we may be sent to fearful punishments in the next, may be remitted to a flaming purgatory, or, at least,

to

to those low-spirited pleasures the poets fancied in the Elysian fields. The territories of the dead will be hung all in darkness. If a total remission be, by the philosopher's light, opened to us, it will shew us a discharge, in due time, from the penalty that is inflicted on the body : and a discharge from that will shew us a dismissal from the grave, and that dismissal will be a resurrection from the dead ; which neither old nor new philosophers say any thing of. Strange, there should be so deep a silence, on so important a matter, and so necessary, as remission of sins is, in the religion of nature.

And here we should have been glad to have heard the philosopher consider the dismal phenomenon of death, and to have heard what he would argue concerning it. As, whether it were the attendant of innocent nature, or of the guilty only. If, of the innocent nature, would the good Creator make pure and honourable vessels so soon to be broken to pieces ? If, of the guilty only, how long has nature been thus guilty ? Is there any history of the world that makes mention of an immortal people ? And then, how comes it to reign over those that have not actually sinned, and thereby contracted guilt ? How great a part of mankind dies in infancy ? And, therefore, how can they be supposed to have been set in a state of probation ? If our primitive ancestors sinned, how comes it that penalty must be produced down to the latest posterity ? Does natural light shew, that posterity may be punished for the transgression of remote ancestors ? And if it may, and such a visible penalty (with all the forerunners and consequences of it) continually lies upon mankind, how shall we be delivered from it ? Or, must we never be delivered from death and the grave ? Does not the philosopher's light here leave him, and the darkness call for some supernatural revelation ? But what religion of nature shall we now have, without REMISSION OF SINS ?

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It will doubtless be said, that it is a man's duty to repent; and that, upon REPENTANCE, we may be assured God will pardon the sin, and be reconciled.

But this important case should be a little farther considered. It may seem rational indeed to conceive, that an offending creature is obliged to repent of his offence against his great and good Creator. Repentance may seem his first duty, or the first part of his return to his duty to his God. What can be accepted from an impenitent spirit?

But, how does it appear, that REPENTANCE must needs obtain a PARDON? or that all the penitent must needs be forgiven? For,

(1.) It will not be said, that all temporal governors are obliged, in reason and equity, to pardon all the penitent criminals in all their dominions. Just execution may be due to the community. The honour and dignity of the government must be supported. It is supposed, that the divine Legislator himself has forestalled his vicegerents, the secular princes, from the pardon of wilful murder. Much less will he be obliged, by any of our regret and repentance, to pardon that and all other sins of such despicable subjects as we are.

(2.) A wise governor would scarce publish a law beforehand, in which he promised pardon and impunity to the most flagrant transgressions of all his laws, in case they should repent. Let us suppose, there was once a state of innocency, (and there must have been so, as long as we are sure that God made man good); we cannot rationally suppose, that man, in that state, had a law in reason and nature, assuring him, that in case he transgressed any of the laws, or all the laws he was then under, he should, upon his repentance, be immediately pardoned. Such a pardoning law would be the ready way to supplant precedent laws, to make man negligent of his obedience to them, and to enervate the force of any penal sanction added to them. And, if the light and law of reason did not, in the state of innocence, promise pardon

pardon to future penitent transgressors, how does it do it since? Reason was as clear then, as it is now; and as much God's law then, as it is now. And the nature and perfections of God would be as much known then, as now. It is true, reason does not say, that the penitent shall be equally punished with the impenitent. So much duty as is performed in and by repentance, so much guilt will be prevented, which would be contracted by and for the omission of such duty. And thereupon, so far as the goodness of God leads us to repentance, it would lead us to a proportionable impunity. But, it does not follow, that the performance of a small part of duty, must procure the pardon of a great deal of sin. But,

(3.) What is this repentance that is supposed to be such an infallible security of the divine forgiveness? Is it a perfect abhorrence of all sin, and a perfect return to God, and to full obedience to him for the future? Were it so, (though it would not compensate or atone for past impiety), yet more might be said on the behalf of it. But, since it is an imperfect repentance, proceeding from an imperfect knowledge both of the evil of sin that has been committed, and of God against whom it has been committed, it is but an imperfect duty, and raises us but to an imperfect obedience: and so the repentance itself, and the obedience it leads us to, will both stand in need of forgiveness. Now, that which itself stands in need of forgiveness, will scarce procure forgiveness for a deal of sin and impiety. May sin and repentance go on for ever in a perpetual round? To allow this, (says the learned Dean of Chichester), differs nothing from allowing a liberty and impunity to sin, without repentance; (*Disc. on Prophecy*, page 58.) At least, to admit that repentance, that must consist with future sin; and to forgive the sins that are intermixed with repentance, must be the act of sovereign, unobliged clemency and grace.

(4.) At what time must this repentance begin and commence? If early, and in youth, how shall I be
O assured,

assured, that the sins and impenitence of thirty or forty years will be forgiven? Or, will a long adjourned, late repentance, be accepted with God, in order to a full forgiveness? How will the religion of nature assure me of that? Or, has it nothing to say in this case? O how defective will it be! If I have sinned fifty years, and have but one month to live, will reason assure me, that the repentance of one month, suppose it to be true, will obtain the forgiveness of all the sins of fifty years? What evidence of that? Sure I am, it is hard to persuade the sensible conscience, that one notorious sin, such as murder, adultery, blasphemy, will, upon any repentance, be forgiven. *Prima est hæc ultio, quod, se judice, nemo nocens absolvitur.* And I have some reason to suspect, that some gentlemen, and persons of distinction, that have lived long in impiety, are driven from due thought of repentance and reformation, by a terrified mind, that tells them, their sins are too many, and too flagrant to be forgiven. And so there is no more to do, think they, but drink on, and revel on, and despair and die. But, if the light of nature does not assure us, that a late repentance will be accepted to forgiveness, it does not assure us, that repentance, as such, will be favoured with such a blessing.

(5.) But, if we are assured, that forgiveness may, upon repentance, be somehow or other obtained, it should be considered, whether that forgiveness must be an absolute, gratuitous one, or must be procured by some sufficient atonement made to the offended Majesty of heaven. If forgiveness must be absolute and gratuitous, (that is, unobtained by propitiation, gratuitous to us it will be, whether so obtained or no); then,

1st, What meant the numerous expiations, and expiatory sacrifices, that were so generally made by mankind? Were they all contradictions to the law of truth? Did they implicitly confess, that God had been offended? That there was some excellency or dignity pertaining to God that must be atoned?

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That by some bloody propitiation, he is really atoned? And did the law of truth deny all this? Or, did the God of truth never give any attestation to the acceptableness of propitiatory sacrifice? And,

2d, Is there no perfection in the divine nature, that, in case of sin, and designed forgiveness of sin, would require an honorary propitiation made thereto? It might be proper to consider, what the necessary purity and rectitude of that nature is, what the holiness and the justice is, and its contrariety to all moral evil and turpitude. It would be useful to inquire, whether there be such a perfection as justice belonging to the divine nature. The philosopher must surely acknowledge, that there is some divine attribute or perfection, that we know not how to call better, than by the name of vindictive or punitive justice: Plutarch has his tract *de sera Numinis vindicta*. The poet can say, "Raro antecedentem scelestum deseruit pede pœna claudo." The earth is full of divine judgments, or the awful demonstrations of divine justice. Many are cut off in their sins, as if they were not to be forgiven. Many are so punished, as if it were designed, that their sins should be read in their punishment. Upon commission of notorious sin, conscience is so terrified, that many choose strangling and death, rather than the horrors of their own mind. *Occultum quatiente intus tortore flagellum*. And our author, (the author of the Religion of Nature delineated), says, that if it be reasonable, that the transgressors of reason should be punished, they will most certainly, one time or other, be punished.

3d, Consideration should be had, whether there may not be pertaining to the divine Being, something analogous to what, in superiors and persons of eminence, is called sense of honour, which, in its regulation, is but a due care to act according to a person's proper sphere and dignity. The divine Being cannot but be conscious of his own incomparable perfection, and essential glory, of his transcendent dominion and

authority, and of the vast obligation he has laid upon all intelligent beings, whose essence and powers he upholds, to regard his law and will; and if, in this view of his own incomparable glory, he sees it unmeet and unsuitable to his matchless highness and grandeur, to forgive a world of impiety, idolatry, enmity, blasphemy, and all manner of abomination committed against himself, without a suitable, vast propitiation: What has the world to say against it? Surely, reason, or the nature of things, has something to say, that the religion of guilty nature should be founded on some great and glorious propitiation presented to the Majesty of heaven.

71. The whole of Christian divinity depends on divine revelation. For though there are many truths concerning God, and our duty to him, that are evident by the light of nature, yet no one truth is taught, by the light of nature, in that manner in which it is necessary for us to know it. For the knowledge of no truth in divinity is of any significance to us, any otherwise, than as it some way or other belongs to the gospel scheme, or has relation to Christ the Mediator. It signifies nothing, for us to know any thing of any one of God's perfections, unless we know them as manifested in Christ: and so it signifies nothing to us to know any part of our duty, unless it bear some relation to Christ. It profits us not to have any knowledge of the law of God, unless it be either to fit us for the glad tidings of the gospel, or to be a means of our sanctification in Christ Jesus, and to influence us to serve God through Christ, by an evangelical obedience. And therefore, we stand in the greatest necessity of a divine revelation; and it was most fit and proper, that when God did give us a revelation, it should not only contain those peculiar truths, which purely, and, in every respect, depend on revelation, as, the doctrines of Christ's mediation, and justification through him; but that this revelation should contain every thing that belongs to divinity, needful either to
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be known or to be practised. For it all depends on revelation, in the way in which it is necessary for us to know it.

72. The ANCIENT HEATHENS seem universally to have had the opinion, either by the light of nature, or from TRADITION from the first fathers of mankind, that the gods did reveal themselves to mankind, and that there was a necessity for such a revelation. To this purpose are those words of Cicero, *de divinatione*, p. 206. "Deliberation, says Socrates, is proper for us: but concerning things which are obscure and uncertain, we ought to consult Apollo, whom the Athenians consult publicly, concerning matters of great importance." And in another place, Cicero says thus: "There is an ancient opinion, drawn even from the heroic times, that there is among men a certain divination which the Greeks call prophecy (or inspiration); that is, presension and knowledge of future things." Barrow's works, vol. ii. p. 99. Again, Cicero says, "I see no nation either so polished and learned, or so unpolished and ignorant, as not to think that future things may be pointed out, and may be understood and foretold by some men." Ibid. p. 100. The insufficiency of the light of nature cannot be better described than in the words of Cicero: "If we had come into the world," saith he, "in such circumstances, as that we could clearly and distinctly have discerned nature herself, and have been able, in the course of our lives, to have followed her true and uncorrupted directions, this alone might have been sufficient, and there would have been little need of teaching and instruction. But now nature has given us only some small sparks of right reason, which we so quickly extinguish with corrupt opinions, and evil practices, that the true light of nature nowhere appears. As soon as we are brought into the world, immediately we dwell in the midst of all wickedness, and are surrounded with a number of most perverse and fool-

“ isth opinions; so that we seem to suck in error
 “ with our nurse’s milk. Afterwards, when we re-
 “ turn to our parents, we are committed to tutors;
 “ then, we are further stocked with such variety of
 “ errors, that truth becomes perfectly overwhelmed
 “ with falsehood, and the most natural sentiments of
 “ our minds are entirely stifled with confirmed fol-
 “ lies. But when, after all this, we enter upon the
 “ business of the world, and make the multitude,
 “ conspiring every where in wickedness, our great
 “ guide and example, then, our very nature itself is
 “ wholly transformed, as it were, into corrupt opini-
 “ ons.” A livelier description of the present corrupt
 state of human nature, is not easily to be met with.
 Clarke’s Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion,
 p. 125.

The wisest of the heathens were never backward to
 confess their ignorance and great blindness, (in moral
 and divine things), and that truth was hid from them,
 as it were, in an unfathomable depth. Nay, that e-
 ven those things, which, of themselves, were of all
 others the most manifest, (that is, whenever made
 known, would appear obvious and evident), their
 natural understanding was, of itself, as unqualified
 to find out and apprehend, as the eyes of bats to be-
 hold the light of the sun; as Aristotle owns.

73. The wisest of the heathens confessed, that
 the very first, and most necessary thing of all, the
 nature and attributes of God himself, were, not-
 withstanding all the general helps of reason, very
 difficult to them to find out in particular, and
 still more difficult to explain, it being much more
 easy to say what God was not, than what he was,
 (as Plato and Cicero confess). And finally, that
 the method of instructing men effectually, and mak-
 ing them truly wise and good, was a thing very ob-
 scure, and dark and difficult to be found out, (as Pla-
 to says). In a word, Socrates himself always open-
 ly professed, that he pretended to be wiser than other
 men,

men, only in this one thing, that he was sensible of his own ignorance. And particularly, they were entirely ignorant of the manner in which God ought to be worshipped. Accordingly, the very best of them complied with the outward religion of their country, and advised others to do the same. Plato, after having delivered very noble, and almost divine truths, concerning the nature and attributes of the Supreme God, weakly advises men to worship likewise inferior gods, demons, and spirits; and dared not to condemn the worshipping even of statues and images, dedicated according to the laws of their country. After him, Cicero, the greatest and best philosopher that Rome, or perhaps any other nation, ever produced, allowed men to continue in the idolatry of their ancestors; advised them to conform themselves to the superstitious religion of their country, in offering such sacrifices to different gods as were by law established; and yet, in many of his writings, he largely and excellently proves these very practices to be extremely foolish. And that admirable moralist Epictetus, who, for a true sense of virtue, seems to have had no superior in the heathen world, even he also advises men to offer libations and sacrifices to the gods, every one according to the religion and custom of his country. But that which, above all other things, these best and wisest of the philosophers were most absolutely ignorant of, was the method in which those that have offended God may be restored to his favour. As to those divers ways of sacrificing, and numberless superstitions which overspread the face of the heathen world, the more considerate philosophers could not forbear frequently declaring, that they thought these rites could avail little or nothing towards appeasing the wrath of a provoked God, or making their prayers acceptable in his sight; but that something still seemed to them to be wanting, though they knew not what. (See Plato's Alcibiades throughout). And as to the immortality of the soul, and a future state of rewards and punishments, the greatest
and

and wisest of the philosophers, notwithstanding the undeniable strength of the arguments, which sometimes convinced them of the certainty of a future state, did yet, at other times, express themselves with great hesitation and unsteadiness concerning it. " I am now (said Socrates, a little before his death) about to leave this world, and ye are still to continue in it. Which of us have the better part allotted us, God only knows." And again, at the end of his most admirable discourse, concerning the immortality of the soul, " I would have you to know, (says he to his friends, who came to pay him their last visit), I have great hopes. I am now going into the company of good men; yet I would not be too peremptory and confident concerning it. But if death be only as it were a transmigration from hence into another place, and those things which are told us be indeed true, that those who are dead to us do all live there; then," &c. So, likewise, Cicero speaking of the same subject, " I will endeavour (saith he) to explain what you desire: yet I would not have you depend upon what I shall say, as certain and infallible: but I may guess, as other men do, at what shall seem most probable; and farther than this, I cannot pretend to go." Again: " Which of those two opinions (saith he) that the soul is mortal, or that it is immortal, be true, God only knows: which of them is most probable, is a very great question." And again, in the same discourse, having brought all those excellent arguments before-mentioned, in proof of the immortality of the soul, " Yet we ought not (saith he) to be over-confident of it: for it often happens, that we are strongly affected at first with an acute argument, and yet, a little while after, stagger in our judgement, and alter our opinion, even in clearer matters than these. For these things must be confessed to have some obscurity in them." And again: " I know not how, (saith he) when I read the arguments in proof of the soul's immortality,

“tality, methinks I am fully convinced; and yet,
 “after I have laid aside the book, and come to think
 “and consider of the matter alone by myself, I fall a-
 “gain, insensibly, into my old doubts.” And Se-
 “neca says, (epistle 102.) “I easily believed the opi-
 “nions of great men promising, rather than prov-
 “ing, a most agreeable thing,” (the soul’s immorta-
 lity).

And these great philosophers themselves confessed, that their philosophy was attended with so much obscurity and uncertainty, and such abstracted speculation, and such nice and subtle disputations, that it was no proper or fit means for the reforming of the world of mankind, and leading them to happiness. Thus, Cicero *de republica*, says, “Although the disputes of philosophers contain the most abundant sources of virtue and science, yet, compared with the actions of those who govern the state, I am apprehensive that they will be found not to have brought so much real advantage to the business of men, as amusement in their leisure hours.” So Lactantius, speaking of Cicero, says, “Philosophy, says Cicero, is contented to be known but by a few, and designedly avoids the multitude. Therefore, it is a great argument, that philosophy neither tends to wisdom, nor is itself wisdom, that its mysteries are celebrated by those only, who wear the long beard and the cloak.”—“In this case, (as Cicero excellently expresses it) in like manner as in physic, it matters nothing, whether a disease be such, that no man *does*, or no man *can* recover from it; so, neither does it make any difference, whether by philosophy no man *is*, or no man *can* be made wise and good.”

For these reasons, there was plainly wanting a divine revelation, to recover mankind out of their universally degenerate state, into a state suitable to the original excellency of their nature. Which divine revelation, both the necessities of men, and the natural notions which the wise heathens had of God, gave them

them reasonable ground to expect and hope for, as appears from the acknowledgements which the best and wisest of them have made of their sense of the necessity and want of such a revelation, and from their expressions of the hopes they had entertained, that God would, some time or other, vouchsafe it unto them.

“ Ye may even give over all hopes of amending
 “ mens manners for the future, (says Socrates), un-
 “ less God be pleased to send you some other person
 “ to instruct you.” And Plato: “ Whatever, (saith
 “ he) is fit, right, and as it should be, in the pre-
 “ sent evil state of the world, can be so only by
 “ the particular interposition of God.” There is
 an excellent passage in Plato to this purpose, and
 one of the most remarkable passages, indeed, in his
 whole works, as follows: “ It seems best to me,
 “ (saith Socrates to one of his disciples), that we ex-
 “ pect quietly, nay, it is absolutely necessary that we
 “ wait with patience, till such time as we can learn
 “ certainly how we ought to behave ourselves, both
 “ towards God and towards men.” “ When will
 “ that time come? (replies the disciple), and who is
 “ it that will teach us this? For methinks I earnest-
 “ ly desire to see and know who the person is that
 “ will do it.” “ It is one (answers Socrates) who
 “ has now a concern for you. But in like manner, as
 “ Homer relates, that Minerva took away the mist
 “ from before Diomedes’s eyes, that he might be a-
 “ ble to distinguish one person from another; so, it
 “ is necessary that the mist that is now before your
 “ mind, be first taken away, that afterwards you may
 “ learn to distinguish rightly between good and evil;
 “ for as yet you are not able to do it.” “ Let the
 “ person you mentioned (replies the disciple) take a-
 “ way this mist, or whatever else it be, as-soon as he
 “ pleases: for I am willing to do any thing he shall
 “ direct, whosoever this person be, so that I may
 “ but become a good man.” “ Nay, (says Socrates)
 “ that person has a wonderful readiness and willing-
 “ ness

" nefs to do all this for you." " It will be best then
 " (replies the disciple) to forbear offering any more
 " sacrifices, till the time that this person appears."
 " You judge very well, (answers Socrates); it will be
 " much safer so to do, than to run so great a hazard
 " of offering sacrifices, which you know not whe-
 " ther they are acceptable to God or no." " Well,
 " then, (replies the disciple) we will then make our
 " offerings to the gods when that day comes; and I
 " hope, God willing, it may not be far off." And,
 in another place, the same author having given a large
 account of that most excellent discourse, which So-
 crates made a little before his death, concerning the
 great doctrines of religion, the immortality of the
 soul, and a life to come, he introduces one of his
 disciples replying in the following manner: " I am
 " (saith he) of the same opinion with you, O Socra-
 " tes, concerning these things, that to discover the
 " certain truth of them in this present life, is either
 " absolutely impossible for us, or at least exceeding-
 " ly difficult. Yet, not to inquire with our utmost
 " diligence into what can be said about them, or to
 " give over our inquiry before we have carried our
 " search as far as possible, is the sign of a mean and
 " low spirit. On the contrary, we ought therefore,
 " by all means, to do one of these two things; ei-
 " ther by hearkening to instruction, and by our own
 " diligent study, to find out the truth; or, if that
 " be absolutely impossible, then to fix our feet upon
 " that, which, to human reason, after the utmost
 " search, appears best and most probable; and, trust-
 " ing to that, venture, upon that bottom, to direct the
 " course of our lives accordingly, unless a man could
 " have still more sure and certain conduct, to carry
 " him through this life, such as a divine discovery
 " of the truth would be." I shall mention but one
 instance more, and that is of Porphyry, who, though
 he lived after our Saviour's time, and had a most in-
 veterate hatred to the Christian religion in particular,
 yet confesses, in general, that he was sensible there
 was

was wanting some universal method of delivering mens souls, which no sect of philosophers had yet found out. See Clarke's Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion, from p. 138. to p. 159.

From a general notion that prevailed in the first ages, among all nations, that religion was to be taught by a revelation from the gods, all such as gave institutions and rules for religion, pretended to have received them from the gods by divine revelation, as Romulus, Numa, Lycurgus, and Syphis king of Egypt. If reason only had been the first guide in matters of religion, rulers would neither have thought of, nor have wanted the pretence of revelation to give credit to their institutions. Whereas, on the other hand, revelation being generally esteemed in all nations to be the only true foundation of religion; kings and rulers, when they thought fit to add inventions of their own to the religion of their ancestors, were obliged to make use of that disposition which they knew their people to have, to receive what came recommended to them under the name of a revelation.— (This from Shuckford's history.)

74. The only way that reason can teach men to know God, must be from considering his works; and if so, his works must be first known and considered, before they can teach men to know the Author of them. It seems to be but a wild fancy, that man was at first raised up in the world and left entirely to himself, to find out, by his own natural powers and faculties, what was to be his duty and his business in it. If we could imagine the first men brought into the world in this manner, we must, with Diodorus Siculus, conceive them, for many ages, to be but very poor, sorry creatures. The invisible things of God, are, indeed, to be understood by the things that are made; but men, in this state, would be, for many generations, considering the things of the world in lower views, in order to provide themselves the conveniences of life from them, before they would reflect

reflect upon them in such a manner, as should waken up in their minds any thoughts of a God. And when they should come to consider things in such a light, as to discover by them that there was a God; yet, how long must it be before they can be imagined to have arrived to such a thorough knowledge of the things of the world, as to have just and true notions of him? We see, in fact, that when men first began to speculate and reason about the things of the world, they reasoned and speculated very wrong. In Egypt, in Chaldea, in Persia, and in all other countries, false and ill-grounded notions of the things which God had made, induced them to worship the creatures instead of the Creator: and that, at times, when other persons who had less philosophy, were professors of a truer theology. The descendants of Abraham were worshippers of the God of heaven, when other nations, whose great and wise men pretended to reason about the works of the creation, did in nowise rightly apprehend, or acknowledge the work-master; but deemed either fire, or the wind, or the swift air, or the circle of the stars, or the violent water, or the lights of heaven, to be the gods which govern the world: being delighted with their beauty, or astonished at their power, they took them for gods. In a word, if we look over all the accounts we have of the several nations of the earth, and consider every thing that has been advanced by any, or all the philosophers; we can meet with nothing to induce us to think, that the first religion of the world was introduced by the use and direction of mere natural reason. But, on the other hand, all history, both sacred and profane, offers us various arguments to prove, that God revealed to men, in the first ages, how he would be worshipped; but that, when men, instead of adhering to what had been revealed, came to lean to their own understandings, and to set up what they thought to be right, in the room of what God himself had directed, they lost and bewildered themselves in endless errors. This, I am sensible, is

a subject that should be examined to the bottom; and I am persuaded, if it were, the result of the inquiry would be this, That he that thinks to prove, that the world ever did, in fact, by wisdom, know God; that any nation upon earth, or any set of men ever did, from the principles of reason only, without any assistance from revelation, find out the true nature, and the true worship of the Deity, must find out some history of the world entirely different from all the accounts, which the present sacred and profane writers do give us; or his opinion must appear to be a mere guess and conjecture, of what is barely possible, but what, all history assures us, never was really done in the world.

75. “ If pardon and salvation are designed for the world, it is altogether meet that they should be proclaimed and promised. If they are not proclaimed and promised, there will be no sufficient assurance of them. Patience is not pardon; forbearance is not forgiveness: and if the divine patience administer some hope, yet the judgements of God upon the world will suggest as much anxiety and dread. And so, through fear of death and destruction, the self-conscious mind must be all its time subject to terror and bondage. If it be so hard for a sensible mind, now, upon a public proclamation and promise, to believe the forgiveness of sins, it would be much more difficult to believe it, without any such security.

“ If pardon and salvation must be publicly proclaimed and promised to the guilty world, there will be an impediment or bar laid against it by the divine purity and justice. What sort of a Deity must that be, that has an equal respect to good and evil? Universal rectitude requires, that equity and equitable laws should be maintained and executed, in the territories that are to be governed.

“ That

" That there is vindictive justice in God, seems
 " evident, 1st, From the excellency and perfection
 " of his nature, by which he must hate all moral
 " turpitude, and all the workers of iniquity. 2^d,
 " From his jealousy and concern for his own glory,
 " by which he will be displeased with all that is con-
 " trary thereto. 3^d, By the judgments which are
 " continually executed in and upon the world for
 " transgression, and sometimes by such special judge-
 " ments, that have been an evident retaliation, or
 " have marked out the sin in the punishment. 4th,
 " By the dictate of natural conscience, that often
 " trembles upon the commission of great enormities,
 " and expects that great transgressions should meet
 " with some signal token of divine vengeance. When
 " the barbarians saw the venomous animal hanging
 " on Paul's hand, they concluded him some great
 " criminal, whom, though he had escaped from the
 " rage of the sea, yet vengeance would not suffer to
 " live. 5th, By the offence which men usually take
 " at divine Providence, when it permits men to pro-
 " ceed and prosper in their notorious villanies. 6th,
 " By the early and universal practice of propitiatory
 " sacrifices in the world. If they were at first insti-
 " tuted by God, then God would have an acknow-
 " ledgement of our sin and his righteous displeasure,
 " in the atonement that was made him. If they
 " were voluntarily taken up, and practised by men,
 " there is an indication of mind and conscience, that
 " some deference must be paid to divine justice, and
 " that to such a degree, that they were sometimes
 " ready, in their ungoverned imaginations, to sacri-
 " fice the fruit of their body for the sin of their soul.
 " The righteousness of God being thus evident in
 " itself, and acknowledged by the world, that if
 " man was to be pardoned by public edict and cove-
 " nant, it was altogether congruous thereto, that
 " there should be some great valuable sacrifice slain
 " and offered to God for the sin of the world. It
 " was meet that there should be a public demonstra-

“ tion of the holiness and purity of God, and of his
 “ hatred of sin, that the world may not be tempted
 “ to abuse his goodness, and presume upon his mer-
 “ cy. It is meet that his dominion and authority
 “ should be supported, that had been so rejected by
 “ the world ; that his law, the rule of his govern-
 “ ment, should be asserted and maintained ; that his
 “ honour and glory, after so much contempt and
 “ disgrace as the impious world had cast upon him,
 “ should be raised up and illustrated ; that the par-
 “ doning edict, being founded in sacred blood, should
 “ be established and ratified ; that, by a joint demon-
 “ stration of justice and love, the world may be driv-
 “ en from sin, and drawn to repentance and God.
 “ And here, divine wisdom shines, in reconciling righ-
 “ teousness and grace together, and accomplishing
 “ our salvation in the way and method of an eternal
 “ redemption.

“ This sacrifice should be valuable above all creat-
 “ ed excellence and power. There is a world of
 “ most aggravated heinous offences to be atoned for.
 “ It is an infinite majesty that has been offended.
 “ It is an infinite justice that is to be propitiated.
 “ It is an infinite impunity, an exemption from an
 “ endless punishment, an advancement to an endless
 “ felicity, that is to be procured. All that intelli-
 “ gent creation can do for the Creator, is due to
 “ him on its own account. Let all the intelligent
 “ creatures take heed to themselves, that they do
 “ not, by their own fault, fall under the displeasure
 “ of God. His majesty and justice may despise their
 “ interposition on the behalf of an apostatized, sinful
 “ world.” Religion of Jesus delineated, p. 135. &c.

76. “ If sin, universally spread, brought universal
 “ death into the world ; if it was worthy of a compas-
 “ sionate God, to send some one into the world to
 “ take away sin ; if miracles were the best proof of
 “ his mission ; if his own resurrection was the most
 “ convincing miracle that could be wrought, and, at
 “ the

“ the same time, carried with it the most experi-
 “ mental assurance of an happy victory over all the
 “ effects of sin, and a comfortable renovation of the
 “ moral world; and if it was as easy with God to
 “ raise up his Son from death, as it is for one man
 “ to wake another out of sleep; I think the resur-
 “ rection of Christ very far removed from improba-
 “ bility.” Deism revealed, vol. i. p. 24.

77. “ If the fact of Christ’s RESURRECTION,
 “ on account of its unusualness, appears improbable,
 “ it will, on account of its expediency, appear in a
 “ higher degree probable, if duly considered. See-
 “ ing philosophy, and other ordinary means, had
 “ proved insufficient to retrieve mankind from ignor-
 “ ance, wickedness, and misery, if God has mercy
 “ on mankind, and has not utterly forsaken the
 “ world and cast it off; recourse must be had to ex-
 “ traordinary and supernatural means, that is, to re-
 “ velation. For we cannot possibly conceive any o-
 “ ther effectual expedient for such a purpose; nor
 “ can we conceive how the person by whom the re-
 “ velation should be made, could prove himself to be
 “ a messenger sent from God, without working mi-
 “ racles. Were he vested with no higher signs of
 “ power than other men, his plainer dictates would
 “ appear to be no more than the obvious suggestions
 “ of common sense, or, at most, of philosophy:
 “ And if he delivered any doctrines undiscoverable
 “ by the force of reason, they would appear to be
 “ less. In either respect, he could only teach in his
 “ own name, not in that of God; and consequent-
 “ ly, without authority or effect. That it is highly
 “ probable, God would send us an Instructor thus
 “ qualified and impowered, and that this is not a
 “ probability only invented by divines to serve the
 “ purposes of christianity, appears evidently from
 “ hence, that PLATO fell into the same way of
 “ thinking, long before our Saviour came into the
 “ world. He was strongly of opinion, that God
 P 3 “ would

“ would send some person or being into the world,
 “ who should teach mankind how they ought to serve
 “ the Supreme Being. But had such a person ap-
 “ peared in Plato’s time, that philosopher would,
 “ no doubt, have expected from him the signs and
 “ credentials of a divine commission; which could
 “ have been nothing else but miracles. For, without
 “ miracles, the pretended messenger could have had
 “ no right to dictate to Plato, nor to assume any
 “ higher character than that of a philosopher.”
 Deism revealed, vol. ii. p. 16. 17.

78. As we see, that in this world, the greatest
 prosperity does not always attend virtue, nor the
 greatest adversity always attend vice, but that it very
 often happens contrariwise; so, the inward perturba-
 tion and remorse which arises from vice, and the
 pleasures of reflection and self-approbation, are by
 no means of themselves proper and sufficient sanctions
 of the law of nature. “ Punishments annexed to this
 “ law, ought to be proportionable to the violations
 “ of the law. Remorse of conscience is not always
 “ in proportion to the heinousness of crimes. For
 “ an old habitual sinner feels less remorse after the
 “ committal of the most enormous crimes, than the
 “ raw, unpractised sinner does after transgressions of
 “ a much more venial nature. So that the punish-
 “ ment grows less, as the crime to which it is ap-
 “ plied grows greater. Nature, left to itself, runs al-
 “ most unavoidably into habits of wickedness; and,
 “ as fast as it does so, rids itself of its remorses, which
 “ ought still to be growing stronger and keener, as
 “ habit tempts it to greater enormities. From hence
 “ it appears, that some greater punishment, not di-
 “ minishable by the decay of the moral sense, ought
 “ to be expected, in order to prevent our falling in-
 “ to the grossest crimes, or to make examples of us,
 “ if we do.” Deism revealed, vol. i. p. 124.
 “ The happiness of particular nations and earthly
 “ societies, bears a most minute proportion to that
 “ of

“ of God’s universal kingdom : and yet it is con-
 “ fessed, that the peace and pleasure which natur-
 “ ally attend the practice of virtue, and the remorse
 “ which attends vice, are not sanctions of the law
 “ of nature sufficient for the defence and preserva-
 “ tion of earthly societies and kingdoms : But hu-
 “ man laws, enforced with the sanctions of civil pu-
 “ nishments, must be added. If the laws of nature
 “ were sufficiently clear, (as the Deists say they are),
 “ those of society need never, in cases purely moral,
 “ tell us our duty ; and if they were sufficiently en-
 “ forced, society would have no occasion to institute
 “ other enforcements of much greater cogency, in
 “ order to their being observed. Nay, if the law of
 “ nature were, in the several respects of clearness,
 “ authority and obligation, perfect and sufficient,
 “ society itself would be altogether needless. Men
 “ would observe justice, and practise beneficence to-
 “ wards one another, without adventitious obliga-
 “ tions. A lover of liberty would not care to enter
 “ into society, to become subject to magistrates, to
 “ support expensive contributions, to tie himself up
 “ to burdensome forms, and stoop to the will of o-
 “ thers, if he found he could live independent, and
 “ converse and traffic safely with mankind in a state
 “ of nature. The arguments drawn from the sup-
 “ posed sufficiency of reason and nature, to invali-
 “ date the NECESSITY OF REVELATION, prove
 “ with the same force, be it more or less, that so-
 “ ciety is unnecessary. If the laws of nature be able
 “ to effect their own end, and that end is moral
 “ instruction and obligation ; then, indeed, there
 “ can be no sort of occasion for other laws, neither
 “ divine nor human. However, it will be worth
 “ while to consider, whether the evil dispositions
 “ and vices of men do not force them into society ;
 “ and again, whether civil society, considered in it-
 “ self, is at all able to remedy the evils they seek to
 “ shelter themselves from. If a law should come
 “ forth, although from a known authority, and con-
 “ ceived

“ceived in the plainest terms, forbidding murder;
 “under the penalty of all that severity which men
 “are by nature disposed to exercise upon themselves,
 “after doing such an action, and enjoining benefi-
 “cence, by a promise of all those rewards, which
 “men, after doing good offices, are enabled by na-
 “ture to confer on themselves; it would be looked
 “upon as a burlesque upon laws.” Deism revealed,
 vol. i. p. 128. 129.

79. “It is very clear, that natural religion hath a
 “necessary dependence on revelation, and on that
 “part of Christianity which may be called super-
 “natural. For natural religion, in any sense, is but
 “a name without a well-grounded hope of immor-
 “tality, which no man ever had, or, for aught we
 “can tell, ever could have had, if some superior
 “being had not revealed it to him.

“That man who does not believe in his own im-
 “mortality, can never conceive himself to be any
 “thing else than a better kind of brute, concerned
 “only in present and sensible things, given up to
 “appetite and passion; and, after a few years exist-
 “ence in vanity and vexation, perishing for ever in
 “the dreadful gulf of annihilation. Yet, to believe
 “in the immortality of the soul, and to be convin-
 “ced we shall account hereafter for our actions to
 “Almighty God by any law, is to all men, (for all
 “have sinned), a most shocking article of faith, if
 “an atonement for sin is not also to be believed in;
 “because it affords us no other prospect, but that
 “of a judgement, wherein, as we must plead guilty,
 “and stand self-convicted, so there is nothing to
 “prevent our being condemned by Almighty God,
 “to a punishment, of which we know not the limits,
 “either in point of severity, or duration. Now, the
 “doctrine of an atonement carries us directly to that
 “of Christ’s incarnation, and a personal distinction
 “in God. So that the mere light of nature, in our
 “present circumstances, can afford us either no reli-
 “gion,

“ gion, or such an one as can serve no other purpose, but that of driving a rational and thinking mind to despair.” *Deism revealed*, vol. i. p. 172: 173. edit. 2.

Lucretius had good reason to object to the Pagan (that is, as Lord Herbert calls it, the natural) theology, that it afforded no hope of forgiveness after sinning.

“ At mens sibi conscia facti,
 “ Præmetuens adhibet stimulos, terretque flagellis ;
 “ Nec videt interea, qui terminus esse malorum
 “ Possit, nec qui sit pœnarum denique finis ;
 “ Atque eadem metuit magis hæc ne in morte
 “ gravefcant.”

God must be considered not only as merciful, but as just also, and capable of inflicting punishments, as well as dispensing rewards. If the subjects know they are to be forgiven, the penalties of the law are of no effect. Mercy shewn publicly to all, can hardly fail of encouraging all to transgress, should they be tempted to it.

And if there are any degrees of wickedness so great, that the light of nature gives us no ground to expect pardon, how shall we know what those degrees are ? Does the light of nature plainly point out the limits ?

God is the Supreme Monarch of the whole universe. It belongs to him to see justice done, to render to every man according to his deeds, in order to support the dignity of his laws, on which the happiness of all the free and intelligent creation depends : and which, if any one might transgress with impunity on merely repenting, I cannot see how his kingdom can be preserved. Every one will repent some time or other, if he thinks he is to be pardoned, and thereby exempted from intolerable punishments ; by which means it will come to pass, that no one shall suffer : and so the penal laws of God will be in vain, although the world shall be filled with wickedness ;
 and

and by no temptation so much as by this very expectation of impunity on repentance, deferred as long as the delinquent pleases.

Let us know, whether the law of nature promises pardon for sin, whether for all sins, or only for some; and, if some only, what those sins are; and whether absolutely, or on certain conditions; and, if the latter, what those conditions are. These are points well worth inquiring after.

Besides, God's assistance is necessary to true repentance. Before a sinner can begin to be the object of God's favour, he must cease to be what he was before, and commence a new man. None but the Creator can make a new man, or a new creature. There is a degree of strength necessary to a true repentance, such as no man is master of. Deism revealed, vol. i. p. 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244.

Mere repentance can make no satisfaction to justice for injuries and offences past: it can only put a man in the way of his duty for time to come, which he owes to God, and which, therefore, can clear no scores with him. As to the reformation of a transgressor, together with his disposition to lead a new life for the time to come, it may be rendered very precarious, by the supposed easiness of obtaining pardon. Man is frail; and, in hopes of being pardoned again, may again transgress, unless his reason tells him he cannot be forgiven a second or a third offence.

Although he who murders a man repents, and, for the time to come, carefully avoids the least approach to such an action; yet, in his latter behaviour, he only does what it was always his duty to do, and no more: but makes no atonement to his poor neighbour, whom he hath deprived of life; nor to the community, from which he hath cut away a member; nor to God, whose creature and image he hath defaced. The Deists can never show, on their principles, that the murderer, or any other criminal, can make the least atonement or reparation for either the offences he commits against God, or the wrongs he does

does to man, in cases where restitution is out of the question. They say, the observation of the natural law alone can render men acceptable in the sight of God; and propose it as the only rule by which they are to act, and consequently, to be judged. It is by this, that, according to the Deistical hypothesis, all men must stand issue before Almighty God, and be acquitted for the observation, or condemned for the transgression, of it. Now, I appeal to experience, and to the heart and conscience of every man, whether he does not live in the daily transgression, be it in higher or lower instances, of those laws which he believes God requires the observation of at his hands; and whether, after the most sincere repentance, and the most thorough reformation he can make of his life and conduct, he finds not enough of evil dispositions and lapses to lament in himself, and put him in mind, that he is one of those debtors, who, having nothing to pay in towards former accounts, is still adding to, and increasing the debt. Thus, I think, it appears pretty plainly, that if all men have sufficient means of knowing their duty, as the Deists insist they have; and if every man transgresses the rules of his duty, as his conscience cannot but inform him he does; the whole race of mankind are lost for ever.

“ It is certainly for the good of men in general,
 “ and of all intelligent beings, that the laws of God,
 “ on which all order and happiness necessarily de-
 “ pend, should be duly enforced: And this can never
 “ be, if the punishment annexed to the transgression
 “ of them, may be evaded by repeated repentances,
 “ after repeated sins: which is but trifling with the
 “ laws and the majesty of their author. The Deists
 “ themselves own, that he who transgresses the law
 “ of nature, is without excuse; since that law is
 “ sufficiently made known to him, and placed even
 “ within his own heart. This makes wilful of-
 “ fenders of all mankind, and justifies their Judge,
 “ in laying on them all those severities, whatever
 “ they

“ they are, which he hath annexed to the transgres-
 “ sion of his law, and made fully known to men,
 “ as a main and necessary enforcement of that law.
 “ There is no reason to think, that sinful men will
 “ ever cease to sin, if they do not stand in awe of
 “ such severities; or that they will ever give up their
 “ sinful, but long indulged delights, if they be not
 “ encouraged so to do, by a better grounded hope of
 “ pardon, than the mere light of nature can give
 “ them. We may be confident, they will not, in
 “ this life; and, to repent in the next, may, for
 “ aught nature can tell us, be too late.” Deism re-
 vealed, edit. 2. vol. i. p. 239,—249.

“ I appeal to the hearts of all men, whether to
 “ suppose, as many do of late, that God will only
 “ punish the vilest delinquents, so far as to make
 “ those of them to amend their behaviour in another
 “ world, who die in their sins, would not be wholly
 “ to defeat the good ends proposed by the law; and
 “ whether such a medicine, substituted in the place
 “ of a punishment, would not unchain the outrageous
 “ appetites and passions of mankind, and turn the
 “ world into an hell of confusion and misery. What
 “ a sight would this be, for all the other intelligent
 “ beings of the creation, to see the evil let loose up-
 “ on the good; and wretched men, already too prone
 “ to wickedness, tempted to become devils, by a
 “ promise of pardon beforehand? A law, without a
 “ penalty equal to the strong tendency to evil in
 “ many, or most of the subjects, instead of being a
 “ defence to good men, would most miserably op-
 “ press them. Their respect for the law and its au-
 “ thor, would effectually tie up their hands; while
 “ the worst of men, with a licence, prompted by
 “ hopes of impunity and reconciliation with God,
 “ would oppress and plunder, and cut their throats
 “ at discretion.” Deism revealed, edit. 2. vol. ii.
 p. 64.

“ A religion that does not tell us what will please
 “ or displease God, tells us nothing. And a religion
 “ that

“ that can neither bind us firmly to our duty, nor
 “ afford us rational hopes of pardon from God, after
 “ we have acted against the rules of our duty, is an
 “ hideous religion, that serves only for condemna-
 “ tion.” Deism revealed, vol. ii. p. 84.

80. One thing wherein the deficiency of natural light appears, is this, that if men, without revelation, should suppose that they should be forgiven on repentance and reformation, and also, that there is a future state; yet the light of nature alone never could be sufficient to ascertain the limits of their day of probation, and satisfy them, on sure grounds, that repentance shall never be accepted in some future state; or whether ever the time would come, when the case of sinners would be hopeless, or past remedy by repentance.

81. Some may ask, why the scripture expresses things so unintelligibly? It tells us of Christ's living in us, of our being united to him, of being the same spirit, and uses many other such like expressions. Why doth it not call directly by their intelligible names, those things that lie hid under these expressions? I answer, Then we should have an hundred pages to express what is implied in these words, “ ye
 “ are the temple of the Holy Ghost :” neither would it after all be understood by the one fourth part of mankind. Whereas, as it is expressed, it serves as well to practice, if we will believe what God says, that, some way or other, we are inhabited by the Holy Ghost as a temple, and therefore we ought to keep ourselves holy and pure. And we are united to Christ as much as members are to the head; and therefore ought to rejoice, seeing we know that this union proceeds from his love to us; and that the effects of it, are joy, happiness, spiritual and eternal life, &c. By such similitudes, a vast volume is represented to our minds in three words; and things that we are

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not able to behold directly, are presented before us in lively pictures.

82. There is a strange and unaccountable kind of inchantment, if I may so speak, in scripture history, which, although it is destitute of all rhetorical ornaments, makes it vastly more pleasant, agreeable, easy and natural, than any other history whatever. It shines bright with the amiable simplicity of truth. There is something in the relation, that, at the same time, very much pleases and engages the reader, and evidences the truth of the fact. It is impossible to tell fully what I mean, to any that have not taken notice of something of it before. One great reason why it is so, doubtless is this: The scripture sets forth things just as they happened, with the minute circumstances of time, place, situation, gesture, habit, &c. in such a natural method, that we seem to be actually present; and we insensibly fancy, not that we are readers, but spectators, yea actors in the business. These little circumstances wonderfully help to brighten the ideas of the more principal parts of the history. And, although the scripture goes beyond other histories, in mentioning such circumstances; yet no circumstances are mentioned, but those only that wonderfully brighten the whole story, and illustrate, no body knows how, every part of it. So the story is told very fully, and without the least crowding or jumbling things together, or hastening one thing after another, before one has fully taken up what was last related; and yet told in much less room, than any one else could tell it. Notwithstanding the minute circumstances that are mentioned, which other historians leave out, it leads along our ideas so naturally and easily, that they seem to go neither too fast nor too slow. One seems to know as exactly how it is from the relation, as if he saw it. The mind is so led on, that sometimes we seem to have a full, large and particular history of a long time: so that if we should shut the book immediately, without taking particular notice,

notice, we should not suppose the story had been told in half so little room, in but two or three negligent words or expressions; and yet a long train of ideas is communicated. The story is so narrated, that our mind, although some facts are not mentioned, yet naturally traces the whole transaction. And although it be thus skilfully contrived, yet things are told in such a simple, plain manner, that the least child can understand them. This is a perfection in the sacred writers, which no other authors can equal, because, in order to it, an infinite understanding is necessary.

83. It is an argument with me, that the world is not yet very near its end, that the church has made no greater progress in understanding the scriptures. The scripture, and all parts of it, were made for the use of the church here on earth; and it seems reasonable to suppose, that God will, by degrees, unvail the meaning of it to his church. It was made obscure and mysterious, and in many places having great difficulties, that his people might have exercise for their pious wisdom and study, and that his church might make progress in the understanding of it, as the philosophical world makes progress in the understanding of the book of nature, and in unfolding its mysteries. A divine wisdom appears in ordering it thus. How much better is it to have divine truth and light break forth in this way, than it would have been, to have had it shine at once to every one, without any labour or industry of the understanding? It would be less delightful, and less prized and admired, and would have had vastly less influence on mens hearts, and would have been less to the glory of God. It seems to be evident, that the church is not as yet arrived to that perfection in understanding the scriptures, which we can imagine is the highest that God ever intended the church should come to. There are a multitude of things in the Old Testament, which the church then did not understand, but were reserved to be unfolded in the Christian church, such as most of their types, and shadows, and prophecies, which

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make

make up the greatest part of the Old Testament. So I believe there are now many truths that remain to be discovered by the church, in the glorious times that are approaching.

Another thing from which we may draw the same conclusion, is, that it is the manner of God, to keep his church on earth in hope of a still more glorious state: and so their prayers are enlivened, when they pray that the interest of religion may be promoted, and God's kingdom may come. God kept the church, under the Old Testament, in hope of the times of the Messiah. The disciples of Christ were kept in hope of the conversion of the Roman empire, which was effected about three hundred years after. But it seems to me, not likely, that the church, from that time, should have no more to hope for from God's word, no higher advancement, till the consummation of all things. Indeed, there will be a great, but short apostasy, a little before the end of the world: But then, it is probable, the thing that the church will hope and long for, will be Christ's last coming, to advance his church to its highest and its everlasting glory; for that will then appear to be the only remedy: For the church will expect no more from the clear light and truth which will have been so gloriously displayed already, under the millennium. Another end of thus keeping his church in hope, is, to quicken and enliven their endeavours to propagate religion, and to advance the kingdom of Jesus. It is a great encouragement to such endeavours, to think, that such times are coming, wherein Christianity shall prevail over all enemies. And it would be a great discouragement to the labours of nations, or pious magistrates and divines, to endeavour to advance Christ's kingdom, if they understood that it was not to be advanced. And indeed, the keeping alive such hopes in the church, has a tendency to enliven all piety and religion in the general, amongst God's people.

84. When we inquire, whether or no we have scripture grounds for any doctrine, the question is, Whether or no the scripture exhibits it any way to the eye

eye of the mind, or to the eye of reason? We have no grounds to assert, that it was God's intent, by the scripture, in so many terms, to declare every doctrine that he would have us believe. There are many things the scripture may suppose that we know already. And if what the scripture says, together with what is plain to reason, leads to believe any doctrine, we are to look upon ourselves as taught that doctrine by the scripture. God may reveal things in scripture, which way he pleases. If, by what he there reveals, the thing is any way clearly discovered to the understanding, or eye of the mind, it is our duty to receive it as his revelation.

85. *Proposition*: The greatest part of Christians were very early agreed, what books were canonical, and to be looked upon as the rule of their faith.

It is impossible, in the nature of things, but some churches must receive the books long after others, as they lay at a greater distance from the places where they were written, or had less convenience of communication with them. Besides, as Christianity, for a long time, laboured under the disadvantages of continual persecution, no general councils could be convened, and so there could be no public notification of universal agreement in this matter. But notwithstanding all these things, it is yet discoverable, that, as soon as can be supposed, after the writing the books, the Christians, in all countries, remarkably agreed in receiving them as canonical. For a proof of which, I observe,

(1.) That in the few genuine writings of the first ages, now extant, the same books are cited as scripture. It is indeed, without just reason, commonly presumed, that the first writers cited the now received books of the canon, and others, promiscuously. But as I shall hereafter shew this to be a mistake, so it will be enough here to observe, that they were generally agreed in receiving the same books for canonical, which we now do; and this appears from their agreement

to cite them, as every one must acknowledge, who has but cast his eye upon the writings of the first centuries. To say nothing of the apostolic fathers, such as Clemens, Barnabas, &c. it is evident, that Justin Martyr at Neapolis, Theophilus at Antioch, Irenæus in France, Clemens at Alexandria, Tertullian at Carthage, (who all lived within one hundred and twenty, or one hundred and thirty years of our Lord's ascension, and some of them much sooner, and but a very short time after the writing of the books), have all, though in very remote countries, quoted many, or most, if not all, the same books, as scripture. The same might be observed concerning Origen, Cyprian, and other writers of the next century. It has been already proved by Mr Nye, and Mr Le Clerk, that the writers of the apostolic age were well acquainted with, because they frequently cite, several books of our present canon. And if it had not been so, it would have been impossible for them to have spread so much by the middle of the second century, as to have been quoted by all the writers of it, in whatever countries they lived.

(2.) Several of the first writers of Christianity, have left us, in their works, catalogues of the sacred books of the New Testament, which, though made in countries at a vast distance from each other, do very little differ. A particular account of all the catalogues I shall give hereafter.

I shall only instance, now, in those of Origen and Eusebius; which he, that will be at the pains to compare, will easily perceive to be very nearly the same. So great were the pains and care of those early Christians, to be well assured what were the genuine writings of the apostles, and to distinguish them from all pretended revelations of designing men, and the forgeries they published under sacred titles. Thus, when a presbyter of Asia had published a spurious piece, under the name of Paul, he was immediately convicted, and notice of the forgery was soon conveyed to Carthage and the churches of Africa.

Corol.

Corollary: Hence it follows, that the primitive Christians are proper judges to determine what book is canonical, and what not: For nothing can be more absurd than to suppose, in those early ages, an agreement so universal, without good and solid foundation: or, in other words, it is next to impossible, either that so great a number of men should agree in a cheat, or be imposed upon by a cheat. But there are some particular circumstances that make the inference more clear as to the Christian books, than others; such as, the prodigious esteem the books at first were received with; the constant use that was made of them in their religious assemblies; the translations made of them very early into other languages, &c. See Jones's canon of the New Testament, part. i. chap. 5.

The two following pages contain A LIST of all those places in the Christian writers, of the four first centuries, in which are to be found catalogues of the books of the New Testament.

N. B.—The omission of a book in some one or two particular catalogues, cannot, with any reason, be urged against its canonical authority, if it be found in all, or most of the others, and any good reason can be assigned for the omission, where it occurs. Thus, for instance, the Revelation is omitted, either perhaps because it was not known to the author, or its credit was not sufficiently established in the country where he lived; or perhaps, which may be as probable as the other, because it being so full of mysteries, few or none were judged proper or able to read it to any purpose. This was certainly the case in England: this book being, for this reason, omitted in the public kalendar for reading the scriptures, though it be received into the canon. If, therefore, these, or any such good reasons, can be assigned for the omission of a book in a particular catalogue, (as I hope will appear in the particular examination of the books), it will be very unfair to infer that such book is apocryphal, especially when it is to be found in many or most other catalogues.

I. Ori-

<i>The Names of the Writers.</i>	<i>The Times in which they lived.</i>	<i>The Variation or Agreement of their Catalogues with ours now received.</i>	<i>The Places of their Writings in which these Catalogues are.</i>
I. Origen, a presbyter of Alexandria, who employed incredible pains in knowing the Scriptures.	A. C. 210.	Omits the Epistles of James and Jude, though he owns them both in other parts of his writings.	Comment. in Math. apud Euseb. Hist. Eccles. l. 6. c. 25. et l. 5. Exposit. in Joan. ibid.
II. Eusebius Pamphilus, whose writings evidence his zeal about the sacred writings, and his great care to be informed which were genuine, and which not.	315.	This Catalogue is exactly the same with the modern one; only he says, the Epistles of James, Jude, the 2d of Peter, the 2d and 3d of John, though they were generally received, yet had been by some doubted of. As to the Revelation, though he says some rejected it, yet he says others received it; and himself places it among those which are to be received without dispute.	Hist. Eccles. l. 3. c. 25. Confer ejusdem lib. c. 3.
III. Athanasius, Bp. of Alexandria.	315.	Perfectly the same with ours now received.	Fragment. Epist. Testat. Tom. II. et in Synopsis Tom. I.
IV. Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem.	340.	The same with ours, only the Revelation is omitted.	Catech. 4. § ult. p. 101.
V. The Bishops assembled in the Council of Laodicea.	364.	The Revelation is omitted.	Canon LIX. N. B. The Canons of this Council were not long after received into the body of the Canons of the universal Church.
VI. Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis and Cyprus.	370.	The same with ours now received.	Hæref. 76. cont. anom. p. 399.
VII. Gregory Nazianzen, Bishop of Constantinople.	375.	Omits the Revelation.	Carm. de veris et genuin. Scriptur.

<i>The Names of the Writers.</i>	<i>The Time in which they lived.</i>	<i>The Variation or Agreement of their Catalogues with ours now received.</i>	<i>The Places of their Writings in which those Catalogues are.</i>
VIII. Philastrius, Bishop of Brixia in Venice.	A. C. 380.	The same with ours now received, except that he mentions only 13 of Paul's Epistles, (omitting, very probably, the Epistle to the Hebrews), and leaves out the Revelation.	Lib. de Hæres. num. 87.
IX. Jerome.	382.	The same with ours, except that he speaks dubiously of the Epistle to the Hebrews, though in other parts of his writings he receives it as canonical.	Epist. ad Paulin. 83. Tract. 6. p. 2. also commonly prefixed to the Latin Vulgar.
X. Rufin, Presbyter of Aquilegium.	390.	It perfectly agrees with ours.	Expof. in Symbol. Apostol. § 36. int. Ep. Hieron. Par. 1. Tract. 3. p. 110. et inter. Op. Cypr. p. 575.
XI. Austin, Bishop of Hippo in Africa.	394.	It perfectly agrees with ours.	De doctrin. Christ. l. 2. c. 8. Tom. Op. 3. p. 25.
XII. The 44 Bishops assembled in the 3d Council of Carthage.	St Austin present at it.	It perfectly agrees with ours.	Vid. Canon. 47. et Cap. ult.
XIII. The anonymous author of the works under the name of Dionysius the Areopagite.	390.	It seems perfectly to agree with ours; for though he doth not, for good reasons, produce the names of the books, yet (as the learned Daille says, de Scrip. suppos. Dionys. c. 16.), he so clearly describes them, as, that he has left out no divine book, may be easily perceived.	Lib. de Hierarch. Excl. c. 3. p. 3.

••• See Jones's Canon of the New Testament, part i. ch. 8.

An universal agreement of writers, in the most remote countries, in quoting the same books as scripture, and no other as such, is, if the fact be true, a very plain and demonstrative indication of the right canon. It is not at all necessary I should here go about to prove the fact, viz. that the writers of the four first centuries, have cited such and such books, and universally omitted others. This I hope to make good hereafter. And I cannot but think it worth observing, that Eusebius (to whom, above all others, we are indebted for our helps to establish the canon), makes frequent use of the same proposition, to distinguish between those books that are, or are not to be received. So, for instance, he proves the first epistle of Peter to be genuine, because the most ancient writers of Christianity, before his time, made continual use of it in their writings, as an undoubted book. And, a little afterwards, he proves the acts of Peter, the gospel, the preaching and the revelation of Peter, to be apocryphal, because none of the writers of the Christian church have, in their writings, taken any testimonies out of those books. And elsewhere, having mentioned several spurious books under the apostles names, such as, the gospels of Peter, Thomas, Matthias, the acts of Andrew, and John, and others, he rejects them, because no ecclesiastical writer hath made any use of them in his writings. See Jones's canon of the New Testament, part i. chap. 9.

Those books are canonical which the primitive Christians read in their churches or public assemblies, as the scriptures, or word of God.

As it was the constant practice of the Jewish church, in their synagogues; so it was of the Christians, in their religious meetings, to read the sacred scriptures. This practice is clearly proved from Colossians iv. 16., where St Paul mentions the reading, publicly, in the church of the Colossians and Laodiceans, his epistle to the former, as also an epistle from the latter in the church of the former. This we find, in the beginning of the second century, from Justin Martyr.

Martyr. "On the day, says he, which is called Sunday, there is a meeting of all the Christians, who live either in cities or country places; and the memoirs of the apostles, and writings of the prophets, are read." So Tertullian, giving an account of the Christians meetings, says, "They assembled to read the scriptures, and to offer up prayers." And in another place, among the solemn exercises of the Lord's day, he reckons reading the scriptures, singing psalms, &c. The same account we have in Cyprian, the ancient book under the name of Dionysius the Areopagite, and several other ancient writers cited by Pamelius, in his learned notes on Tertullian's apology. Now, I say, these books are to be received by us as canonical: forasmuch as this practice of reading the scriptures was so very early, that it is hardly possible to suppose the churches imposed upon by any spurious or forged pieces. It is not likely that any church would thus introduce the public reading of any new book, or book newly come to hand, as scripture, that never heard of any other church's doing of it, unless it be those that first received it, and knew it to be from some sacred writer by their own knowledge; and especially, that other Christian churches in general should so soon follow the example of that church, that introduced a new writing into public reading, without such foundation. And hence, no spurious writing, that none knew to be from any sacred writer, could be introduced into the public reading of the Christian church. Cyril of Jerusalem, instructing his catechumens concerning the scriptures, tells him to avoid apocryphal books, and study carefully those scriptures only, which were publicly read in the church: and a little after, having given him a catalogue of the sacred books, he adds, "Let all others be rejected; and such as are not read in the churches, neither do you read in private." Hence, in the middle of the fourth century, it was decreed, in the council of Laodicea, in their fifty-ninth canon, that "no private
" psalms

“psalms should be read in the churches, nor any books without the canon, but only the canonical ones of the Old and New Testament.” Jones’s canon of the New Testament, part i. chap. 10.

The translation of the books of the New Testament into Syriac, is of very considerable service in determining and fixing the canon of those books.

The truth of this proposition depends upon the antiquity of the version. For, if the most ancient Christians are to be judges, and their testimony is to determine in this matter, as hath been proved, their judgement can no way be more evident, than in the collection or choice which they made of books to be translated into their own language; and, if such collection of books was made by the eastern churches, in the time, or at least near the time of the apostles, it must consequently be of great weight in deciding this matter. I shall endeavour therefore to show, that the Syriac version was made in or near the apostles times: and, in order to this, I shall first produce all that is historical concerning it. And as to the history of this version, it is a constant and ancient tradition among the Syrians, that it was made by St Mark. This account we have from Postellus, who travelled into the eastern parts of the world, in order to inform himself of all that he could among them, who declares, that the Syrians delivered it to him as an ancient tradition, that St Mark translated his own gospel, and the rest of the books of the New Testament, into his own country’s language, that is, the Galilean or Syriac. The first time the Europeans became acquainted with this version, was in the year of Christ 1562. On this occasion, Ignatius, a patriarch of Antioch, hearing of the advantages of printing, sent a certain priest of Mesopotamia, called Moses Meridinaeus, into Europe, with a copy of the Syriac Testament, to be printed for the benefit of the Christians of those eastern parts of the world. After this, were noticed some ancient manuscripts of it, that had lain
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lain hid in Europe. And as to the antiquity of this version, I shall,

(1.) Mention the opinion of learned men.

The first is Tremellius, who published and translated it into Latin; who says of it, That it "seems every way probable, that it was made in the very infancy of the church of Christ; either by the apostles themselves, or their disciples; unless we will imagine them in their writings to have had a concern only for the churches of foreign nations, and none for those of their own country."

Our learned Fuller calls it "a most ancient, a very excellent, and truly divine monument of Christianity."

Allsted: "The Syriac version of the New Testament, is to be attributed to the church of Antioch, while yet in its infancy, and to those in that city who were first called Christians; and though the author of it be not certainly known, yet it is very likely it was made by some of the apostles, or their disciples."

Jacobus Martini, in his preface to Trautius's edition: "It is a version, but the first and most ancient of all: It is a version preferable to all others: It is a version made, either by one of the evangelists, or by some of the Christians at Antioch, who had the opportunity of consulting with the apostles there."

Frederick Spanheim the father, had the same opinion of its antiquity. Bishop Walton has attempted to prove, that it was made in the apostles times.

Frederick Spanheim the son, in his ecclesiastical history, places this version in the second century after Christ, assenting to the agreed opinion of learned men, that it was made very near the apostles times.

Father Simon allows its claim to the greatest antiquity just; and well observes, that it preceded all those schisms, which afterwards divided the eastern nations into different sects: and this, he adds, is the cause that they all equally esteem it.

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Such have been the received sentiments of the learned concerning this version.

(2.) It was absolutely needful, that such a version should be made in or near the apostles times, and therefore very probable that one was then made.

It was at that time the language of the first Christian churches, and those innumerable multitudes that were converted to Christianity in Jerusalem, Galilee, Cæsarea, Damascus, Antioch, and all the country round about. It was the language spoken by the Jews in those countries, as well as the Gentiles that were the original natives. Here were the first converts to Christianity made, and the first Christian churches founded; and it is unreasonable to suppose that they were long destitute of those books, which contained the records of what Christ had said and done, and the foundations of their religion.

(3.) The Christians of Syria were wont to read the sacred scriptures of the New Testament in their churches and public assemblies, very soon after the apostles times: and therefore a translation of them was made into the Syriac language. This is manifest, by a passage of Justin Martyr, who lived in the beginning of the second century, and plainly speaks of himself as being a disciple of the apostles. He tells, that, in their religious assemblies, every Sunday, the writings of the apostles and prophets were read: (by Christians, doubtless he must be understood to include the Christians in that part of the world where he dwelt). Now, Justin was a native, as he himself says, of Palestine in Syria, viz. Neapolis in Samaria, and dwelt in Syria, in which country, as has been proved, Syriac was the language. If the writings of the New Testament were read in the churches where Justin Martyr lived, they were read in Syria: and if they were read in Syria, they were read in the Syriac language, because no other was there understood; and consequently, a translation of the New Testament into Syriac, was made out of Greek in Justin Martyr's time, i. e. within a few years of the

the apostles times : and the Syriac version of the New Testament now extant, is very probably the same which was made in or near the apostles times. This is constantly asserted by the Syrian churches, from whom we had it ; and there was no more probability of the Syrian churches losing their translation, than of the Western churches losing their Greek copies. For the same reason, as Greek copies did multiply, the Syriac ones would multiply too.

(4.) There are some internal characters in the translation itself, that evidence its great antiquity ; as, particularly, the name " Ptolemais," Acts xxi. 7. is rendered, by its ancient Jewish name *Aco* ; which it is not likely that it would be known by among Christians, long after the destruction of Judea and Jerusalem, after which there was no body of Christian Jews by themselves ; but they were mingled with Gentile Christians, and were of the same communion with them. And in the translation of the Greek records, *ΕΛΛΗΝ*, *Εθνη*, *Εθνικός*, and their adverbial derivatives *Ελληνιστί* and *Εθνικώς* ; in all places where either of these words occurs, they are rendered according to that understanding or sense of such phrases, which was peculiar to the Jews, as separated from all the rest of the world, who looked upon the rest of the world as profane ; and therefore cannot be thought to have been so used by any other Christians, than the primitive Christian Jews, still retaining the phraseology of their nation, which could not be long after the destruction of Jerusalem ; for the Christian Jews, after this, being of the same communion with the Gentile Christians, were soon mixed with them, and must be supposed to use the like kind of language. Thus, the word *ΕΛΛΗΝ* properly signifies a Greek ; but among the Jews, it was used to denote all the world besides the Jews. Hence, we frequently find in the New Testament, the distinction of all mankind into Jews and *ΕΛΛΗΝΕΣ*, which our translators render Jews and Gentiles : And so the word *Εθνη* in the New Testament denotes, in a peculiar sense, all nations besides the

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Jews.

Jews. In the ideas of both these words, the Jews implied something that was bad, or (which is the same thing) they looked upon all the world as profane, sinners, unclean, &c. And agreeably to this, in the Syriac version, the word *ΕΛΛΗΝ* is translated very often by a word that signifies *profane, impious, or sinful*; and in many places it is translated *a Syrian, Arameus*; and the word *ΕΘΝΙΚΟΣ* is translated *profane or impious*; and *ΕΘΝΙΚΩΣ*, which we translate *after the manner of the Gentiles*, Gal. ii. 14., is there translated *after the manner of the Syrians*, and *ΕΘΝ* is very often rendered *profane*. Now, none but the Christian Jews would have formed a translation so exactly according to the Jewish notions and phrases; and it is not likely, that the Eastern Christians, though they had some Jewish blood in them, would so naturally fall into such a way of speaking, long after the wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles was entirely broken down, which was kept up in some measure till the destruction of Jerusalem; but, then, was utterly abolished between Christians, Jews, and others. But, to put the matter out of doubt, I will single out one word, viz. *Armojo*, which he most commonly uses for *ΕΛΛΗΝ*, which signifies a Syrian. Now, to understand the reason of this appellation, viz. why Gentile and Syrian, or profane, were among the Jews synonymous terms, we must observe, that they always had a contemptible opinion of the Syrians, as being idolaters. So we find in Onkelos's Chaldee version, the words *uncircumcised* and *Syrian*, are used promiscuously to denote any foreigner or profane person, Levit. xxv. 47., because they were their nearest neighbours and idolaters. By this it is evident, that the Syrian interpreter was a Christian Jew, that lived either before, or not long after the destruction of Judea by the Romans. The word is so translated *Syrian*, instead of *Gentile*, in Acts xvi. 1. 3.; xix. 10. 17. and xx. 21. Rom. i. 16.; ii. 9, 10. 1 Cor. i. 22, &c.; x. 32.; xii. 13. Gal. ii. 3. 14.; iii. 28. Col. iii. 11. It cannot be objected that the translator knew no other

ther Syriac words whereby to translate the above-mentioned Greek ones; for it is certain, that he not only knew others, but, with a great deal of accuracy and justice, has made use of them. That when the word ΕΛΛΗΝ, in the New Testament, is put to denote those who were properly Grecians, or inhabitants of Greece, he makes use of a word nearly the same with ΕΛΛΗΝ or ΕΛΛΗΝΟΣ, a Greek, properly so called. So, when Paul divides all mankind into Greeks and Barbarians, the Syriac interpreter uses that word, Rôm. i. 14.; so Colos. iii. 11.: so when the proper natives of Greece are meant, as Acts xiv. 1., or xvii. 4. 12, &c.; and so when the Greek language is spoken of in the New Testament, as Luke xxiii. 38., and John xix. 20.; Acts ix. 29. and xxi. 37. This is a most convincing argument, that where he translates the word ΕΛΛΗΝ in the other manner, he spake according to the language of the Jews; and therefore, that he lived in the time above-mentioned.

(5.) There is a most remarkable agreement between the Syriac translation, and our best and most ancient copies of the New Testament, as with Beza's famous manuscript, which he gave to the university of Cambridge, undoubtedly the oldest now in the world. The same may be said of several other ancient copies.

(6.) It is an argument of the great antiquity of this translation, that it hath not in it the four Catholic epistles, viz. the second of Peter, the second and third of John, and the epistle of Jude, nor the Revelation. Now, these being wanting, must necessarily proceed from one of these causes: 1st, Because they were not written when the version was made: or, 2^d, Because the knowledge of them was not yet come to the Syrian churches: or, 3^d, Because they were not yet universally received into the number of the canonical books. Now, whichsoever of these be said, the antiquity of the version will be sufficiently established. But the first of these seems most probable; because, as I shall hereafter shew, the churches of Syria did

both know and receive several of these books, at least, as canonical, in the second century, as it is certain they do now, though it seems they are not ordinarily bound with the others in the same volume, and read in their churches. This argument was thought so conclusive by Tremellius, and our learned bishop Walton, that from it they were persuaded to believe this version was made in the apostles times.—See Jones's canon of the New Testament, p. 14. and following chapters.

What follows is extracted from the bishop of London's third Pastoral Letter, p. 14, &c.

We find all the four gospels, under the names of the several evangelists, distinctly spoken of by the most early writers of the church, as the known and undoubted records of our Saviour's life and actions, and, as such, received by all the Christian churches, and read in their public assemblies. Clement, the disciple of St Paul, cites many passages out of them: and in one place, having quoted the prophecy of Isaiah, he adds, "*And another scripture saith;*" and then quotes the gospel of St Mark. In another place, he cites the gospel of St Luke, with these words immediately prefixed, "*The Lord saith in the gospel.*" Polycarp, a disciple of St John, mentions these four gospels distinctly, and by name, with particular circumstances relating to each. Justin Martyr, speaking of the institution of the Lord's Supper, says, The apostles, in their records, which are called gospels, declared, that it was commanded by Christ so to be performed: and a little after, adds, That those records were publicly read in the Christian assemblies on the Lord's day. And in his other works, he uses the same style of *the records of the apostles*, and cites several passages out of them, as the standing records of the church. Tatian, the disciple of Justin, reduced the four gospels into one, which, in after ages, was usually called the harmony of the four gospels. Irenæus gives this account of all the four:—Matthew, says he, delivered his gospel to the Hebrews, while
Peter

Peter and Paul preached at Rome ; after whose departure, Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, conveyed to us in writing the things which Peter had preached ; and Luke, the companion of Paul, recorded in a book the gospel which Paul preached. Afterwards, John, the disciple of our Lord, who also leaned on his breast at supper, published his gospel while he staid at Ephesus in Asia. The same Irenæus, speaking of the authority of the gospels, says, That the very heretics gave their testimony to them, while each laboured to support his opinion from them. And as to the number, they were neither more nor less than four ; and that they who made them either more or fewer, were vain, ignorant, and presumptuous. Clement of Alexandria, speaking of a passage cited out of the Egyptian gospel, says, It is not to be found in the four gospels which have been delivered down to us. And Origen, mentioning the writers of the four gospels by name, and in their order, says, That those alone, and no other gospel, had been universally received in the church.

P. 23. Speaking of the Acts of the Apostles, he says, Citations out of this book are found in Clement, the companion of St Paul, and in Polycarp, the disciple of St John. Irenæus, in the second century, writing against the heretical doctrine of two principles, (one good, the other evil), argues throughout the whole chapter from passages taken at large out of Acts, to shew the contrariety of that heresy to the doctrine of the apostles. Eusebius gives an account of the same book, as follows : Luke, a native of Antioch, and a physician by profession, who had lived long and intimately with Paul, and was much conversant with the other apostles, left two books written by divine inspiration, one of them his gospel, the other, intituled the Acts of the Apostles ; which he did not write after the revelations of others, but as facts that he saw with his own eyes : and elsewhere, among the books that were universally received, he reckons

reckons the Acts of the Apostles next to the four evangelists.

P. 35. Eusebius, reckoning up the books of the New Testament, which were universally received, after mention made of the four gospels, and the Acts of the Apostles, adds, Next to these, we are to reckon the epistles of Paul, every one of which, except that to the Hebrews, expressly bears his name; and they are frequently cited and referred to by the most early writers of the church, as has been abundantly shewn by many learned men; and may easily be seen, by looking into the writings of Clement, Ignatius, and Polycarp, in the first century; and after them, into those of Irenæus and Tertullian, in the second. The same thing is there affirmed by Eusebius, of the first epistle of St Peter, and the first of St John, namely, that they had been received universally.

See the proofs of the remaining parts of the New Testament's being authentic, well set forth in the following parts of the letter.

P. 64. And what rendered it yet more impracticable, (to alter or corrupt the books of the New Testament), was the appeal that might be made, upon any suspicion of forgery, to the authentic writings remaining, and kept with the greatest care, in the archives of several churches that had been planted by the apostles, to which Tertullian expressly refers, in his reasonings against the heretics of those times, as then in being, and to be freely consulted.—Thus far the bishop of London.

Eusebius, in his ecclesiastical history, tells us, that
 “ when the three gospels of Matthew, Mark and
 “ Luke, were published and known to every body,
 “ St John at length saw them, approved them, and
 “ confirmed the truth of them; but owned that they
 “ were defective as to the account of those things,
 “ which were done by our Saviour at the beginning
 “ of his ministry. For which reason, John being
 “ desired by his friends, supplied the defects of the
 “ three others, and wrote his gospel to inform us of
 “ that

“ that time, and the things which were done by our
 “ Saviour in it, viz. before the imprisonment of John
 “ the Baptist.”

Besides this testimony of Eusebius, I find, in a very old book, intituled the Martyrdom of Timothy the apostle, of which we have an extract in Photius, that “ when, after the death of Domitian,
 “ Nerva became Emperor, and John returned to Ephesus, from which place he had been banished by
 “ Domitian; he then took the several books which
 “ contained the history of our Saviour’s sufferings,
 “ and miracles, and doctrines, and were now translated into several different languages, reviewed
 “ them, rectified them, and joined himself to the
 “ former three evangelists, by writing his gospel.” Thus Mr Jones, Part iv. at the beginning; and then he goes on to mention the same things that the Bishop of London mentions in his pastoral letter, in the foregoing extract: and besides, Mr Jones adds, that Tertullian has expressly determined the number of gospels which were received by the church in his time to four. Says he, “ the credit of the gospel
 “ history is confirmed to us by two that were apostles,” viz. “ Matthew and John; and two that
 “ were apostolic men, Mark and Luke.” And in the same book, speaking of the same four gospels, and naming them, he says, “ they were patronized
 “ or confirmed by the authority of the apostolic
 “ churches.” Origen, the scholar of Clemens Alexandrinus, says, “ that though there were many gospels forged by heretics, which (says he) we read
 “ that we may not be thought ignorant, yet the
 “ church receives only four gospels.” And a little after: “ There are only four gospels made use of, out
 “ of which the articles of our religion, as from Jesus
 “ Christ, are to be proposed.” Once more, a few lines after: “ Among all these gospels, we approve
 “ none but those which the church approves, that
 “ is, that only the four gospels are to be received.” It would be madness for any one who ever saw Origen’s

gen's work, to ask what four gospels he meant. Besides, he elsewhere, reciting (as he expresses himself) the canon of the church, names these four gospels; "which four alone, (says he), are received without controversy in the church of God which is all over the world." Eusebius, who lived in the beginning of the fourth century, expressly excludes all other gospels from the canon besides these four which we now receive; but places them among the books which were without controversy received by the consent of the whole church. In the Synopsis, under the name of Athanasius, the author tells us, "that all the gospels, which are read by any, are rather fit to be concealed than read, except the four alone which are delivered to us." Ambrose, in his preface to his commentary on Luke, has almost transcribed Origen's words on the same place: "Accordingly, (saith he), though the heretics have many gospels, the church hath only four," &c. Jerome mentions some false gospels, and says, "he will only be concerned with four, which (says he) are in the following order; Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John." And it would be endless to cite the many numerous proofs, that may be easily produced out of the fathers of the fourth century.

As to St Matthew's gospel in particular, Mr Jones observes, that it is in all the catalogues of sacred books. It is often cited in the writings of the fathers that are called the apostolical fathers, *i. e.* the fathers that lived in the apostles days, viz. Barnabas, Clements Romanus, the Shepherd of Hermas, Polycarp, and St Ignatius; concerning whom, Mr Jones says, that though he did not believe the writings under their names were all genuine, and of that age to which they pretend, yet they are undoubtedly very ancient, and referred to by some of the earliest fathers; and some of them were commonly read in the churches of Christians, as pious and useful books: Part iii. ch. x. p. 84, 85. Thus, says he, Dionysius, a bishop of Corinth, in the second century, in a letter to

to the church of Rome, tells them, they read on the Lord's Day Clement's epistle to them, in their assemblies: and Eusebius declares it to have been universally received and read in most churches, both in his and former times. The same he says of the Shepherd of Hermas, that it was read in many churches; which is confirmed by Athanasius and Rufinus, both concerning this, and some other books. St Matthew's gospel is cited twice by Clemens Romanus in his first epistle to the Corinthians, and eight times in the remaining fragment of the second; and in one of his citations, he says thus, "*And another scripture saith, I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.*" The Shepherd of Hermas cites St Matthew's gospel six times; and it is cited seven times in the epistle that is called the epistle of Barnabas; which, though it was not written, as is pretended, by Barnabas the apostle, yet is very ancient. This epistle is often cited by Clemens Alexandrinus, a writer of the second century. It is also sometimes cited by Origen, who was Clemens's scholar; and afterwards, by Eusebius and St Jerome, as Mr Jones shews, Part iii. chap. 37. St Matthew's gospel is cited six times in Polycarp's small epistle; and besides these, in the fragments of the Responsiones of Polycarp, published by Fenar-dentius, there are two places in St Matthew's gospel expounded or paraphrased in these words: "Mat-thew, (says he), testifies, that our Lord said it " was written by Moses, that Adam said thus, This " now is bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh: " for this cause shall a man leave father and mother," &c.; see Matthew xix. 5., and Gen. ii. 23, 24.; and in another place he has these words, "*ye shall indeed drink of my cup,*" &c. by which cup he means the martyrdom of these two apostles, John and James. In the lesser epistles of Ignatius, that are supposed to be his genuine epistles, St Matthew's gospel is cited seven times. St Matthew's gospel is also often cited by the Fathers next the apostolic age; so often, that Mr Jones says, to produce all the places at large, would

would be almost to transcribe the gospels. Thirty-five places are particularly taken notice of in Justin Martyr's works; several times mentioning passages in St Matthew's gospel. He once adds these words, "*This was written in the commentaries of the apostles;*" and once recites a considerable part of Christ's sermon on the Mount, in St Matthew's words; and once having cited some of the words of St Matthew's gospel, he adds, "This is delivered by the apostles, in the commentaries or books made by them, called gospels." St Matthew's gospel is cited four times, in the small treatise of Athenagoras, viz. his excellent Apology for Christianity, which is inscribed to M. Aurelius Antoninus and L. Aurelius Commodus. He was a writer of the second century, either coeval with, or not long after Justin Martyr. And Theophilus Antiochenus, who lived under the same Emperors, and was contemporary with Athenagoras, wrote three small treatises, inscribed to Atolychus, against the enemies of Christianity; in which are five citations out of St Matthew's gospel, and cites Matt. v. 28., under the name of *Ευαγγελικὴ φωνή*. Irenæus, who lived in the second century, has at least two hundred and fifty times cited passages out of the gospel, and does nine times cite St Matthew by name. It is cited one hundred times in the work of Clemens Alexandrinus; and in his citation of Matt. v. 3. St Matthew is cited by name: and citing Matt. xxiii. 12., he calls this gospel, *Θεῖος λόγος*, i. e. the word of God. The citations of the Fathers of the following centuries, as Origen, Cyprian, Cyril, Austin, and others, are omitted, there being innumerable places wherein they cite this, as well as the other gospels.

St Matthew's gospel is canonical, because it was read as scripture in the assemblies or churches of the primitive Christians. Justin Martyr (who cites the gospel, under the name of the Memoirs or Commentaries of the apostles, as is evident by what was just now observed of his citations), tells us, that on every Sunday, there was an assembly of the neighbouring Christians,

Christians, and the memoirs or commentaries of the apostles were read: and that, under this denomination, were included those books that are now called gospels, is plain, from what he said immediately before, viz. "*In the commentaries made by the apostles, which are called gospels.*" Cyril of Jerusalem, who flourished anno 340, enumerating the books which ought to be read in churches, says, "Among the New Testament books, there were only four gospels, and that all others were spurious and hurtful."

Eusebius, in his ecclesiastical history, says, that Bartholomew the apostle, when he went forth to preach and propagate the Christian faith, took along with him the gospel of St Matthew; and particularly, that he preached according to this gospel among the Indians, and left it among them at his departure from them; and that Pantenus afterwards, in the second century, found this gospel among them. This also is related by Jerome; which seems clearly to prove, that St Matthew's gospel met with a suitable reception, and was esteemed of the greatest authority, even in the apostles times. Eusebius furthermore relates, that Papias, who was, according to Irenæus, a disciple of John, and an acquaintance of Polycarp, intimates very clearly, that St Matthew's gospel was in common use in his time; and that Hegesippus, a writer of the second century, "*wrote some dissertations upon the gospel of the Hebrews, or the gospel of St Matthew, which the Nazarenes made use of.*"

The cause or occasion of St Matthew's writing his gospel, is generally agreed upon by the ancient writers, who have made any mention of the matter; viz. that he wrote it at Jerusalem for the sake of the converted Jews, who desired him to write it, when he was about to travel to the Gentile countries, to preach the gospel. So Origen: "The first gospel was written by Matthew, first a publican, then an apostle of Jesus Christ, and published among the converted Jews in Hebrew." Irenæus says, "That St Matthew published his gospel among the Hebrews in
S " their

“ their own language, while Peter and Paul were
 “ preaching at Rome.” Now, though it is not cer-
 tain when Peter was at Rome, yet Paul was there in
 the 3d year of Nero, *i. e.* in or about the year of Christ
 59, or 60, as Eusebius relates in his Chronicon: and
 to this, most chronologers, and writers of church
 history, agree. Eusebius tells us, “ That Matthew,
 “ having first preached to the Hebrews, when he de-
 “ termined to travel into other countries, published
 “ his gospel in the language of his country, and left
 “ it with them to supply the want of his own pre-
 “ sence among them.” To the same purpose Jerome:
 “ Matthew, surnamed Levi, was the first who pub-
 “ lished a gospel, and that in Judea, in the Hebrew
 “ language, principally for the sake of those Jews
 “ who were converted, and did not only regard the
 “ truth of the gospel, but observed the law also;
 “ though, the law being but as a shadow, was abo-
 “ lished.”

[*N. B.* Mr Jones, though he allows that St Mat-
 thew's gospel was very early translated into the He-
 brew, Part iv. p. 55., yet speaks of his having very
 particularly and largely proved, that this gospel was
 originally written in Greek, in a book he published,
 under the name of a Vindication of St Matthew's
 gospel, see Part ii. p. 380.: and there, and in the
 following page, mentions one very probable argu-
 ment for it].

Eusebius, in his Chronicon, places the writing of
 St Matthew's gospel in the 3d year of Caligula, *i. e.* eight
 years after Christ's ascension, or in the year of Christ 41.
 The modern writers generally credit and follow Eu-
 sebius in this matter, and scarce any follow Irenæus.
 I shall transcribe what Mr Le Clerc has said on this
 head: “ They who think that the gospels were writ-
 “ ten as late as Irenæus saith, and suppose that for the
 “ space of about thirty years after our Lord's ascension,
 “ there were many spurious gospels in the hands of
 “ Christians, and not one that was genuine and authen-
 “ tick, do unwarily cast a very great reflection on the
 “ wisdom

“ wisdom of the apostles ; for what could have been
 “ more imprudent in them ; than tamely to have suffer-
 “ ed the idle stories concerning Christ to be read by the
 “ Christians, and not to contradict them by some au-
 “ thentic history ? ” Many of the most ancient manu-
 scripts of this gospel do agree with Eusebius, that Mat-
 thew’s gospel was wrote in the eighth year of our Savi-
 our’s ascension. Thus it is in Beza’s manuscript, the
 oldest now in the world. So it is in the end of several
 very ancient Greek manuscripts which Father Simon
 saw, and more which are cited and referred to by Dr
 Mill. The old Arabic version joins in the same ac-
 count ; viz. That he, St Matthew, wrote his gospel
 in Palestine, eight years after our Saviour’s ascension.
 Theophylact and Euthymius, also assert this gos-
 pel to have been written in the eighth year after
 Christ’s ascension. And it may not be foreign to the
 purpose to observe, how diligent and careful Eusebi-
 us was in collecting his accounts of this sort ; and
 that, though there are some mistakes in his works,
 (which, in so vast undertakings, could hardly be a-
 voided), yet, for the most part, he is very accurate
 and exact, as a chronologer and historian. But Ire-
 næus seems not so exact ; and in the next words,
 gives an evidently false account of the time of St
 Mark’s writing his gospel. See Jones’s Canon of
 the New Testament, Part iv. ch. v.

It is exceedingly natural to suppose, that these two
 things together, would soon lead the apostles to write
 some history of the acts, and doctrine, and sufferings
 of Christ, their great Lord, and the Head of the
 Christian church ; viz. Their unavoidable experience
 of the need of such a thing ; and, *secondly*, The ex-
 ample of the penmen of the Old Testament, in writ-
 ing the history of Abraham, Moses, David, Solo-
 mon, and others, whose persons and actions they
 esteemed of vastly less importance than those of the
 Son of God, who was greater than Jonas, or David,
 or Solomon, or Moses, or Abraham.

It is a great argument, that there were some genuine gospels, or authentic histories of Christ's life and death, that the Christian church had under the name of gospels, that there were such a multitude of forged fabulous accounts, or histories, of Christ, all under the same name of gospels. These fictions are evidently counterfeits or imitations of something that was looked on by all as true and undoubted. And, that there should be such a multitude of counterfeits and imitations of these gospels, shews not only that there were genuine gospels, but also, shews the great value and importance of these genuine gospels, and the high repute they had in the Christian churches.

Mr Jones mentions the following spurious gospels, now not extant, mentioned by the writers of the primitive church : By the writers of the second century, the gospel of Judas Iscariot; the gospel of Truth; the gospel of the Egyptians; the gospel of Valentinus; the gospel of Mareion. By writers of the third century, the gospel of the Twelve apostles; the gospel of Basilides; the gospel of Thomas; the gospel of Matthias. By writers of the fourth century, the gospel of Scythianus; the gospel of Bartholomew; the gospel of Apelles; the gospel of Lucianus; the gospel of Hefychius; the gospel of Perfection; the gospel of Eve; the gospel of Philip; the gospel of the Ebionites; the gospel of Jude; the gospel of the Encratites; the gospel of Cerinthus; the gospel of Merinthus; the gospel of Thaddeus; the gospel of Barnabas; the gospel of Andrew. And some he mentions besides, that are now extant; as, the gospel of our Saviour's infancy; the gospel of Nicodemus.

ST MARK'S GOSPEL is also evidently canonical; because it is in all the catalogues of canonical books that we have in the writings of the primitive Christians, and is one of those four gospels, that are spoken of so often by the Fathers, as those only that ought to be received, as above; and it is in the Syriac version of the New Testament: and (which is remarkable), though there be so few passages in Mark, which

which are not in St Matthew's gospel more largely, and St Matthew's gospel be first, and written by an apostle, and so more likely to be taken notice of; yet St Mark's gospel is often cited by the Fathers in these few passages, and sometimes cited by name; as Justin Martyr once does in these words: "It is said, that he changed the name of one of his apostles into Peter; and the fact is related in his commentaries or gospel."

This is not in Matthew, but in Mark iii. 16.: and though it be in Luke, yet it is evident, that Justin refers to Mark, and not to Luke's gospel, which he calls the commentaries or gospel of Peter. For Mark's gospel, and not Luke's, was so called by the Fathers. Irenæus, in his writings, cites six places, that are only in St Mark's gospel; and twice cites him by name. Clemens Alexandrinus, in his little tract, intituled, *Quis divus salvetur*, has cited a long paragraph out of Mark's gospel; viz. chap. x. from ver. 17. to ver. 32.; and then adds, "*These things are written in the gospel according to Mark.*" Tertullian has cited nine places in St Mark's gospel, that are not in any other. It would be a superfluous and endless labour, to go in like manner through all the writers of the four first centuries. Origen, Eusebius, Athanasius, Epiphanius, Jérôme, Austin, &c. have made too many references to this gospel, to require a collection of them. Besides, several of the Fathers of these times, have wrote commentaries or homilies upon this gospel. And it is evident from Justin Martyr, and Cyril of Jerusalem, and the council of Laodicea, that this gospel was read as scripture, among other books of the sacred scripture, in the assemblies or churches of primitive Christians.

As to the penman of this gospel, the name is mentioned four times in the Acts of the apostles; viz. chap. xii. 12, 25.; and chap. xv. 37, 39. The same person is also mentioned, ch. xiii. 5, 13. Thrice in St Paul's epistles; viz. Colos. iv. 10.; 2 Tim. iv. 11.; Philemon, ver. 24.; once by St Peter,

1 Pet. v. 13. The ancients all agree, that Mark, the Evangelist, was a companion or interpreter of Peter. So Papias, Irenæus, the author of the Hypotyposes, (which went under the name of Clemens Alexandrinus, and was supposed to be his by Eusebius, Origen, Jerome, and many others of the Fathers); which is confirmed by 1 Pet. v. 13. "The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Marcus my son." The name is the same in the original that elsewhere is rendered Mark. He calls him his son, because he was his companion and assistant in preaching the gospel; as Paul, for the same reason, calls Timothy his son, and particularly said of him, that "as a son with a father, he served with him in the gospel." The ancients say, that Mark was with Peter at Rome; and that afterwards, he went down into Egypt, where he preached the gospel which he had written at Rome, and founded many churches in Alexandria. This is related by Eusebius, Epiphanius, Jerome, and many succeeding writers; which I shall pass over; only observing, that the tradition of Mark's founding the church at Alexandria, which Du Pin calls an ancient and certain tradition, was always credited in Egypt. Eusebius relates, that Mark wrote his gospel at Rome, when he was there with Peter, in the reign of Claudius, on the earnest request of the people, who desired to have the truths they had heard written down; and that Peter approved of it, and confirmed the gospel that he had written. This, says Eusebius, is related by Clemens Alexandrinus, in the sixth book of his Hypotyposes, and confirmed by the testimony of Papias. The same Eusebius, in two other places of his works, relates particularly what Papias and Clemens had written concerning St Mark's gospel, confirming that he wrote his gospel as Peter's interpreter. Irenæus says, that after the death of Peter and Paul, who had been preaching at Rome, Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, wrote down what he had heard him preach. Origen adds, that

that Mark wrote his gospel according to the dictates or directions of Peter. The author of the Synopsis, under the name of Athanasius, saith the same as the last. Jerome tells us, that Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, at the request of the brethren at Rome, wrote a short gospel, from what he had heard of Peter; which, when Peter knew, he approved of, and published it in the churches, commanding the reading of it by his own authority. And it may accordingly be observed, that Justin Martyr calls this gospel, the commentaries or gospel of Peter, as above. And in the Syriac version of the New Testament, at the end of Mark's gospel, are these words, "The end of the holy gospel of the preaching of Mark, which he spake and preached in Latin at Rome." As to what is cited to this purpose from Papias, it may be noted, that Papias declares, that he had all traditions of this sort from Aristion, and John the Elder; and he introduces this very testimony concerning the place, occasion, and manner of Mark's writing his gospel, thus: "*And this the elder John said, viz. that Mark, the interpreter of Peter,*" &c. St Mark's publishing his gospel as Peter's interpreter, may probably be the reason that the account of Christ's pronouncing Peter blessed when he had confessed him, and his declaring that he had his faith and knowledge from God, and his promise of the keys, and that large power, which is made to him, &c. are omitted by St Mark, though the former and succeeding parts of this discourse are both told by him; see Matt. xvi. 16,—20. compared with Mark viii. 29, 30. Eusebius takes notice of this; and the learned Douay professor, Estius, whose words are to this purpose: "Why, says he, St Mark should omit in his gospel these great and honourable promises made to St Peter, which we read in Matt. xvi. may be seen in Eusebii Demonstrat. Evangel. lib. 3. c. 7. St Peter's humility would not suffer him to tell those things to St Mark, when he was writing his gospel. It is remarkable, that the three other
" evangelists

“ evangelists relate these things which tend to advance the honour and prerogative of Peter; only St Mark, who wrote his gospel from what he heard from St Peter, hath omitted them; which evidences the great modesty of the apostle.” And Dr Hammond has another argument, by which he endeavours to prove the truth of the account given by the ancients, of St Mark writing under the direction of Peter: after he had produced the account, he adds, “ And of this, there be some characters discernible in the writing itself; as that, setting down the story of Peter’s denying Christ, with the same enumeration of circumstances and aggravations of the fault that Matthew doth, when he comes to mention his repentance and tears consequent upon it, he doth it as became the true penitent, more coldly than Matthew had done, saying only, *he wept*; whereas Matthew hath it, *he wept bitterly*.” Tertullian expressly tells us, that in the primitive church, the gospel of Mark went under the name of the gospel of Peter. And if the word *Babylon*, 1 Peter v. 4. be put for *Rome*, (as is generally thought by the ancients, all the popish writers, and many protestants), we have then, hence, a further confirmation of the ancients account of the occasion of Mark’s writing, viz. his writing from Peter’s direction at Rome, and that he made use of him in the service of the gospel, because he calls him his son. The words are, “ The church which is in Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you, and so doth Marcus my son.”

It is a great argument that St Mark’s gospel was written honestly, and that it was no knavish forgery, that it is so much like St Matthew’s, only shorter. For, what could induce a knave to go about to forge a history of Christ’s life and death, having scarce any thing remarkable in it, but what was in an history already extant, and very little differing from it in any respect, only that it has not so much in it? If the writer was a cheat, he must have known of St Matthew’s

thet's gospel : for a mere fiction would never happen to agree so exactly with another history, through such a series of wonderful things, without knowing of that other history, and copying from it : and what could induce an impostor to publish a new gospel, without any thing new in it ? We see, in all those spurious gospels that so abounded in the primitive ages of the church, that they abound in new and strange things, not related in the gospels that had been before extant. The likeness between St Mark's and St Matthew's gospel, argues the honesty of the penman of St Mark's gospel, whether we suppose he had the other before him or not. If he knew of the other, and had it before him, then, if he had been a knave, and wrote with a dishonest design, he would have added some remarkable things of his own ; unless we suppose he knew of St Matthew's gospel, and that Matthew and Mark, and all, were cheats, and wrote to confirm one another's lies ; which is not supposable. For if St Mark had written with this design, he would not have said less than St Matthew ; and there should have been none of these seeming differences and inconsistencies, which there are between St Matthew's gospel and his ; and he would not have omitted to add his own, or some feigned name himself to his work, that the world might know whose testimony it was : he would probably have pretended to have been an eye-witness, &c. And on the other supposition, viz. of his not knowing of the other, or not copying from it, its likeness with it is a demonstration that he did not make or feign what he wrote. For it is impossible that two impostors, without consulting one another, should make two such stories so much alike.

ST LUKE'S GOSPEL, also, is to be esteemed canonical. For, besides what has been observed, before, of the Syriac version and the ancient catalogues, and what has been observed above, concerning all the four gospels together ; this gospel is often cited by the Fathers, in those things that it contains, that are not in the

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the other gospels. Five such citations are found in the epistles of Clemens Romanus. St Ignatius cites St Luke in his epistle to the Smyrneans. Justin Martyr cites this gospel nine times; and Irenæus cites St Luke's above an hundred times. In lib. 3. adv. Hæref. c. 14. he vindicates the authority and perfection of St Luke's gospel, and has made there a collection of many, or most of the histories, which this evangelist has recorded, which are not mentioned by either of the others; and says, the histories of Christ, which Luke alone has recorded, were received by all Christians; and, in very many places, cites this gospel by the name of Luke. Clemens Alexandrinus cites St Luke's gospel twenty-seven times. The citations out of this gospel, in the works of Tertullian, Origen, Cyril, Cyprian, Ambrose, Austin, Jerome, &c. are so very numerous, and so easy to be observed every where in their writings, that I shall omit making any collections out of them. These, as the preceding Fathers, appeal always to this gospel as scripture; and no wonder they should, when they were assured it was, as Eusebius calls it, *an inspired book*. And that this book was read as scripture, in the churches of the primitive Christians, there is the same evidence that there is for the forementioned gospels. Marcion the heretic, and his heretical followers, had a different gospel of Luke from that which we now receive, which has largely been refuted by Irenæus, Tertullian, and Epiphanius.

That St Luke's gospel should be so early counterfeited, is an evidence that there was a genuine gospel of St Luke's, and is also an evidence of the value and importance of that genuine gospel.

The penman of this gospel is mentioned, Colos. iv. 14. "Luke the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you;" 2 Tim. iv. 11. "only Luke is with me." Philem. ver. 24. "Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellow-labourers." He was not a Jew, as is evident, because he intimates that the dialect of the Jews was not his language, Acts i. 19. *It was called*

Aceldama

Aceldama in their own proper language. And St Paul distinguishes him from those of the circumcision, Col. iv. 10, 11. compared with ver. 14. He saith, that Marcus, Aristarchus, and Jesus called Justus, were the only fellow-labourers of the circumcision who were with him; and yet it is plain, that Epaphras, Demas, and Luke, were fellow-labourers that were then with him: wherefore, these were not of the circumcision. And to confirm this, it is an observation both of the ancients and moderns, as Jerome, Isidorus, Hispalensis, Dr Cave, &c. that Luke's gospel, and Acts, are written in much purer, and more elegant Greek, than the other evangelists. He was a long time the constant companion of St Paul in his travels. This is proved both by the New Testament and the Fathers. In the Acts of the apostles, (xvi. 10, &c.) which book at present, I shall take for granted, was written by Luke, we find him accompanying St Paul in his voyage from Troas to Macedonia; for he speaks there in the first person plural. The twentieth, and twenty-first chapters, tell us of Luke's accompanying Paul to Jerusalem, as the twenty-seventh does of his going along with him to Rome. And accordingly, St Paul, in several of his epistles written from Rome, mentions St Luke as being with him there. Nothing is more commonly affirmed by the ancients, as, Irenæus, Eusebius, Jerome, Isidorus, Hispalensis, &c.; nor has it, that I know of, ever been questioned. The evangelist Luke seems to be spoken of by the apostle Paul, as a man of extraordinary note in the Christian church in general; as a person of great integrity and faithfulness; and as, therefore, a fit person, above any other, to be joined with the apostle in the care and disposal of so great a sum as the collection made in Macedonia and Greece for the saints at Jerusalem, as a most effectual means for the avoiding all suspicion of dishonesty in the management of so great a trust. 2 Cor. viii. 18, 19, 20. "And we have sent with him the brother, whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches, (and not that only,

only, but who was also chosen of the churches to travel with us, with this grace which is administered by us, to the glory of the same Lord, and declaration of your ready mind), avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance (*i. e.* this large sum) which is administered by us." Mr Locke says, in his Notes on this passage, " This brother most writers take to be St Luke, who now was, and had been a long while, St Paul's companion in his travels." The particular view or design which St Luke had in this gospel, seems to have been, to confute the many silly apocryphal gospels, which were then extant, and to prevent the bad influence of them and their heretical doctrines upon the Christian converts. This is what is so manifest from the first words of the gospel, and the universal voice of antiquity, that I need say no more.

As to ST JOHN'S GOSPEL, there are the same arguments from the Syriac version, and the primitive catalogues of sacred books, and from what the ancient fathers have testified concerning the four gospels together, to prove the authority of this gospel, as of the preceding. And this gospel, also, was abundantly cited or appealed to as scripture, in the writings of the primitive Christians. Clemens Romanus, in epist. 1. § 49. manifestly uses those words of this gospel, chap. x. 15. ; and the author of the writing called the epistle of Barnabas, has manifest reference to St John's gospel, when he speaks of Christ's being pierced at his crucifixion, and applies thereto Zech. xii. 10. " And they shall look on him whom they have pierced," in the same words that John's gospel does ; which are very different from the words of the translation of the LXX ; who, through confounding of $\aleph$ with $\beth$, and $\beth$ with $\aleph$ in one and the same word, reading $\aleph\aleph$ instead of $\beth\aleph$. have rendered it *insulted*, instead of *pierced* ; which mistake of the LXX was first observed by Jerome, and after him by Erasmus, Beza, Lightfoot, Hammond, and other critics, on John xix. 37. The author of this pistle did not understand

understand the Hebrew, not being a Jew (as our Jones has demonstrated), and therefore used no other Old Testament but the LXX.

St Ignatius cites this gospel three times, and Justin Martyr five times; and Theophilus Antiochenus, in his second book to Autolychus, cites John i. 1, 2, &c., and introduces it thus: "So the holy scriptures teach, and all inspired writers, among whom is John, who saith, *In the beginning was the Word*," &c. Irenæus has appealed to, or cited this gospel, in above one hundred and twenty several places; and eleven times cites it by name, and several times cites this gospel under the express and distinguishing name of Scripture, or The Scripture. So, for instance, citing John i. 3., he introduces it thus, "As the Scripture saith:" Again, citing John xiv. 6., he says, "he takes the proof from the Scriptures." Clemens Alexandrinus has cited this gospel in forty-two several places. The matter is so clear, and the citations so numerous in the writings of Tertullian, Origen, Jerome, Austin, &c. that I thought it needless to collect them. And there is the same evidence of this gospel's being read as scripture in the assemblies or churches of the primitive Christians, as of the other gospels. In the Hypotyposes, under the name of Clemens Alexandrinus, the author styles John *inspired by the Holy Ghost in writing his gospel*: and Origen says, "This gospel was received, as among the books that were admitted by all the churches in the world."

The penman of this gospel, by the account which other writers of the history of the New Testament give us, was one of those apostles that were most highly favoured and honoured of Christ. He was one of those three that were admitted to be in the mount with Christ at his transfiguration, and to be present with him when he raised Jairus's daughter; whom he took with him in his agony; and was sent with Peter to prepare his last passover, Luke xxii. 8. After Christ's ascension, he preached with Peter in the temple, and healed the lame man; preach-

ed to the people; was apprehended of the Sadducees, imprisoned, and boldly pleaded in defence of Christianity. He was the deputy of the apostles with Peter, to go to Samaria to confirm the disciples there; and is one of those three whom the apostle Paul speaks of as the main pillars; Gal. ii. 9. "And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me," &c.

St Joⁿ seems to have had two particular designs in writing his gospel, viz. the confuting certain heretics, and supplying the defects of the history of Christ in the other gospels. Irenæus tells us, "That the evangelist designed, by his gospel, to confute the errors which Cerinthus and the Nicolaitans had infused into the people, who imagined that there was one God, who was the Creator, and another who was the Father of our Lord Jesus; one who was the Son of the Creator, and another who was the Christ, who continued impassible, and descended upon Jesus the Son of the Creator." Epiphanius says, "John's gospel was written against Cerinthus." Jerome is most particular, and informs us, "That when St John was in Asia, where then arose the heresies of Ebion and Cerinthus and others, who denied that Christ was come in the flesh, i. e. denied his divine nature, whom he in his epistle calls Antichrists, and St Paul frequently condemns in his epistles; he was forced by almost all the bishops of Asia, and the deputations of many other churches, to write more plainly concerning the divinity of our Saviour." Whence we are told, in ecclesiastical history, that when he was solicited by the brethren to write, he answered he would not do it, unless a public day of fasting and prayer was appointed to implore God's assistance; which being done, and the solemnity being honoured with a satisfactory revelation from God, he broke forth in these words, "*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God,*" &c. To the same purpose, Austin saith, this evangelist wrote concern-
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ning the co-eternal divinity of Christ against the heretics. Epiphanius says, he wrote his gospel against Ebion, Cerinthus, Marcion, &c.—Clemens Alexandrinus, Eusebius, Jerome, &c. testify, that he wrote his gospel to supply the defects of the other gospels.

As to THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, St Luke was the penman of the book so called, as is apparent from the constant testimony of all antiquity, the matter being never once questioned by any of the catholic church. Irenæus hath, in several places, ascribed this history to St Luke as its author. Citing Acts viii. 9. he introduces it thus: "Luke, the disciple and follower of the apostles, says thus: A certain man, named Simon." In another place, citing Acts xv. 39, &c. he saith, "Luke was the inseparable companion and fellow-labourer of Paul, and wrote thus," viz. concerning the contention of Paul and Barnabas; and then proceeds largely to prove, that St Luke was the constant companion of St Paul; because, in the Acts, chap. xvi. 10, 11, 12. 16, 17.; and chap. xx. xxi. and xxvii. he speaks in the first person plural. The same he proves from several places, viz. 2 Tim. iv. 11., and Colos. iv. 14.; and concludes, from the whole, Luke's fitness for writing a just and true history. In another place he shews, that St Luke's Acts of the apostles ought to be equally received with his gospel; for that in them he has carefully delivered to us the truth, and given us a sure rule for salvation, &c. Again, lib. iii. c. 13. he observes, that St Paul's account, Gal. ii. 1. of the time when he went to Jerusalem, exactly agrees with Luke's account in the Acts. Lastly, this father, citing part of Stephen's speech, Acts vii. introduces it thus: "So Luke writes," &c. Clemens Alexandrinus, citing Paul's speech at Athens, Acts xvii. 22. introduces it thus: "So Luke, in the Acts of the apostles, relates, that Paul said," &c. The author of the Hypotyposes, under the name of Clemens Alexandrinus, speaks of the likeness there is between the style of the epistle to the Hebrews,

and the Acts of the apostles ; and would from thence argue, that Luke translated the Hebrews out of Hebrew into Greek ; by which it is manifest, that it was then a thing unquestioned, that Luke was the writer of the Acts. Tertullian cites several places out of the Acts of the apostles, which he calls *the commentary of Luke*. Origen ascribes the Acts of the apostles to Luke. Eusebius saith, Luke hath left us two inspired volumes, viz. the gospel and the Acts. Jerome also expressly asserts the Acts to be the composition of Luke. And several ancient manuscript Greek copies, have the name of St Luke prefixed to the history ; as also hath the old Syriac version.

The Acts of the Apostles contains the history of the infant state of the Christian church, for the space of about twenty-eight years. Luke begins this history where his gospel left off, and ends it with the relation of Paul's being brought to Rome, and his abode there for the space of two years. Hence we may see near to what time this history of the Acts was written, viz. either in the year of Christ 62, or not long after. It being altogether improbable, that St Luke would defer his writing long after his departure from St Paul, which seems to have happened when he was set at liberty from his confinement at Rome, (and it is likely that Luke would continue his history to the time wherein he wrote) ; so, it is probable, that Luke continued at Rome after St Paul was set at liberty and went from thence, and that there he wrote his Gospel and the Acts ; for they seem to be as it were one work, the one being to be looked upon as the second part, or a continuation of the other. The Acts of the Apostles seems very early to have been translated out of Greek into Hebrew. This, Epiphanius tells us he had by information from several Jews ; and afterwards, that one Josephus found a copy of the Acts in Hebrew, in the Jewish archives at Tiberias.

The Acts of the Apostles are of canonical authority, because it is found in all the catalogues of sacred books

books which we have in the writings of the primitive Christians; is in the Syriac version; was read as scripture in the churches or assemblies of Christians of the first ages; and is cited and appealed to as scripture in the writings of the primitive Christians. Clemens Romanus cites the words contained in Acts xx. 35.; and he certainly made use of, and appears to have read, Acts xiii. 22.: for, whereas Paul, in that place, manifestly cites Psal. lxxxix. 20., and makes an addition or paraphrase in the citation, inserting these words, *κατα την καρδιαν μου*, which are not in the psalm; Clemens, citing the same psalm, has inserted Paul's addition, which is neither in the original Hebrew, nor in any copies of the Septuagint, nor any various reading like it to be found. Polycarp, in his epistle to the Philippians, cites those words of Peter's speech, which are recorded Acts ii. 24. Justin Martyr cites Acts vii. 22. viz. that Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians; and Justin could not gather this out of the book of Exodus. In the book under Justin's name, undoubtedly ancient, the Acts are often referred to. There are cited, Acts i. 7.; iv. 18.; vii. 22.; ix. 15.; the whole of the x. chapter, and xxiii. 3., and many other places. Irenæus has made thirty citations out of the Acts of the Apostles, and several times calls this book scripture; and, in citing the Acts, he names Luke as the author, and calls him a disciple and companion of the apostles; and particularly argues for the credit of St Luke, and this book that he had written, in one place; and, in another place, citing some part of the history of the Acts, he spends a whole chapter in asserting the credit of St Luke, and the usefulness of his writings, and makes many large citations out of the history of the Acts. Clemens Alexandrinus seven times cites the Acts of the Apostles. Sometimes St Luke is cited by name as the author of this book; and Clemens makes large citations out of this history. Tertullian makes numerous appeals to, and citations from, the Acts. It would

be tedious to collect them all.—This father cites it under the express name of Scripture: “Which part of the Scripture (says he) they that do not receive, must deny the descent of the Holy Ghost, and be ignorant of the present state of the Christian church.” In like manner, he calls it Scripture in another place; disputes against the Marcionites, and condemns them for rejecting the Acts, proving their truth and genuineness by the testimonies of St Paul in his epistles; and, in another place, expressly calls it the compofure of Luke.—The Latin fathers cite them continually, as the only authentic history they had of the primitive state of the church.

It is a great evidence, that there was some book of Acts, that was very early universally known, and esteemed of great value and authority in the Christian church, and accounted a sacred book, That there was such a multitude of spurious books, forged and published under the same name of *The Acts*. Nothing, that had not great repute, would have set so many to work to counterfeit it, and make them so fond of paralleling their spurious pieces with that book that was originally received; and many of them bearing the very same name of the Acts of the Apostles. Mr Jones mentions the following spurious books of Acts in the primitive times of the church, mentioned by writers of the second century, viz. the Acts of Paul and Thecla: by writers of the third century, the Acts of Paul, and the Acts of Peter: and by writers of the fourth century, the Acts of Andrew, the Acts of John, the Acts of Thomas, the Acts of the Apostles by Leuthon or Seleucus, the Acts of the Apostles by the Ebionites, the Acts of Lentius, the Acts of Lentitius, the Acts of Leontius, the Acts of the Apostles made use of by the Manichees, the Acts of Philip.

Julian openly confesses that there were *Peter's*, *Paul's*, *Matthew's*, *Mark's* and *Luke's* writings, which were read by the Christians under those names.—
Grotius de Verit. lib. xiii. c. 3. § 2.

Concerning

Concerning the authority of the *Second Epistle of Peter*, see Sherlock's use and intent of Prophecy, dissertation i. p. 175. &c.

86. The following things are abridged from Deism revealed, second edition.

Mankind cannot subsist out of society, especially if we comprehend families in the number of societies: and families cannot subsist without the protection of greater societies. As children depend absolutely on families for subsistence, so do families on kingdoms and commonwealths, for peace, security, property, life, and every thing. And societies cannot subsist without laws. Its members must know by what constitutions or customs they are to regulate their actions: And magistrates are as necessary as laws; for let the laws be never so good, they cannot execute themselves. And, that laws and magistracy may answer that end, there is need of a Supreme Magistrate, who is almighty, and perfectly wise and just, and all knowing, perfectly acquainted with the conduct of inferior magistrates, and of all the subjects. Otherwise, the greatest irregularities and enormities may be committed by both with impunity. And it is necessary officers and subjects should know that they are under such a Supreme Magistrate, thus perfectly wise and just, who perfectly inspects and takes care of the society, and will judge all, and will reward and punish; and that all must give an account of themselves to him; otherwise the welfare of society will not be influenced by his government. That man, who does not believe that he is to account, in the severest manner, for the use and application of his power, ought never to be trusted with any power; because he will endeavour to draw all the advantages of society to himself and his instruments, and turn all its weight and strength against those who thwart his usurpations. How can mankind be more unhappy than under a fallible, or, I should rather say, a corrupt administration, that stands in awe of no superior?

perior? As to the subjects, if they do not look upon themselves as accountable to one that is omniscient, omnipotent, and inflexibly just, they will follow their own private ends, in all cases wherein authority can be resisted or evaded, which may be done in most cases. Public societies cannot be maintained without trials and witnesses: And if witnesses are not firmly persuaded, that he who holds the supreme power over them, is omniscient, just, and powerful, and will revenge falsehood; there will be no dependence on their oaths, or most solemn declarations.

God therefore must be the Supreme Magistrate; society depends absolutely on him; and all kingdoms and communities are but provinces of his universal kingdom, who is King of Kings, Lord of Lords, and Judge of Judges.

Thus, as mankind cannot subsist out of society, nor society itself subsist without religion; I mean, without faith in the infinite power, wisdom, and justice of God, and a judgment to come; religion cannot be a falsehood. It is not credible, that all the happiness of mankind, the whole civil world, and peace, safety, justice, and truth itself, should have nothing to stand on but a lie: It is not to be supposed, that God would give the world no other foundation. So that religion is absolutely necessary, and must have some sure foundation. But there can be no good, sure foundation of religion, without mankind's having a right idea of God, and some sure and clear knowledge of him, and of our dependence on him. Lord Shaftesbury himself owns, that wrong ideas of God will hurt society, as much, if not more, than ignorance of him can do.

Now, the question is, Whether nature and reason alone can give us a right idea of God, and are sufficient to establish among mankind a clear and sure knowledge of his nature, and the relation we stand in to him, and his concern with us? It may well be questioned, whether any man hath this from the mere light of nature. Nothing can seem more strange,
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than that the wisest and most sagacious of all men, I mean the philosophers, should have searched with all imaginable candour and anxiety for this, and searched in vain, if the light of nature alone is sufficient to give it to, and establish it among, mankind in general.

There never was a man known or heard of, who had an idea of God, without being taught it.

Whole sects of philosophers denied the very being of God; and some have died martyrs to Atheism, as, *Vaninus, Jordanus Bruno, Cosimir Lifzinski, and Mahomet Effendi.*

A man, confined to a dungeon all his days, and deprived of all conversation with mankind, probably would not so much as once consider who made him, or whether he was made or not, nor entertain the least notion of God. There are many instances of people born absolutely deaf and blind, who never shewed the least sense of religion, or knowledge of God.

It is one thing, to work out a demonstration of a point, when once it is proposed; and another, to strike upon the point itself. I cannot tell, whether any man would have considered the works of creation, as effects, if he had never been told they had a cause. We know very well, that, even after the being of such a cause was much talked of in the world, and believed by the generality of mankind; yet many and great philosophers held the world to be eternal; and others ascribed, what we call the works of creation, to an eternal series of causes. If the most sagacious of the philosophers were capable of doing this, after hearing so much of a first cause and a creation, what would they have done, and what would the gross of mankind, who are inattentive and ignorant, have thought of the matter, if nothing had been taught concerning God and the origin of things; but every single man left solely to such intimation as his own senses and reason could have given him? We find, the earlier ages of the world did not trouble themselves

selves about the question, whether the being of God could be proved by reason; but either never inquired into the matter, or took their opinions, upon that head, merely from tradition. But, allowing that every man is able to demonstrate to himself, that the world, and all things contained therein, are effects, and had a beginning, which I take to be a most absurd supposition, and look upon it to be almost impossible for unassisted reason to go so far: Yet, if effects are to be ascribed to similar causes, and a good and wise effect must suppose a good and wise cause; by the same way of reasoning, all the evil and irregularity in the world must be attributed to an evil and unwise cause. So that either the first cause must be both good and evil, wise and foolish, or else there must be two first causes, an evil and irrational, as well as a good and wise principle. Thus, man left to himself, would be apt to reason, "If the cause and the effects are similar and conformable, matter must have a material cause; there being nothing more impossible for us to conceive, than how matter should be produced by spirit, or any thing else but matter." The best reasoner in the world, endeavouring to find out the causes of things, by the things themselves, might be led into the grossest errors and contradictions, and find himself, at the end, in extreme want of an instructor.

It is manifest there is such a thing as evil in the world, and that good and evil have their distinct empires in the world; and the principle from whence the one is derived, is to be feared, as well as the author of the other is to be loved; fear being a cause of adoration as well as love. Are two opposite and supreme principles therefore to be worshipped, according to the belief of almost all the Pagans now in the world? If the mere reason of every man could relieve itself from this difficulty, why should the worship of devils prevail in many nations, and keep its ground during so long a series of ages? This I think is evident, that although reason should be so strong in one man, or in

in a few, as to find out the being of some superior power; yet this would not probably happen, till after many ages spent in vain attempts to account for the origin and regularity of the world. And when some notion of this kind should once be struck out, it would be so imperfect, so uncertain, and blended with so much absurdity and error, that it would scarcely be worth the propagating; which would also be a matter of infinite difficulty. But, supposing it to prevail in some nations, or all over the world; having once preoccupied the minds of men, the improvements made by others, in after times, on the first imperfect discovery, instead of having the notions, derived from that discovery, as a basis to build on, would find them, and the prejudices accompanying them, an infinite obstacle to their propagation. What is said of the first improvement, is as true of all the subsequent ones. The old notions would be so many bars against the new: and, considering the great difficulty of the inquiry, and the vast room for conceit and imagination to graft their wild cions on the fruitful stock; it would produce an almost infinite number of debates, refinements and improvements, each of which must have a course through the world, before it could be examined, in order to settle the right idea of God, and support it with demonstrations universally convincing. Reason labours under a great difficulty in finding out the right notion of God. As the office of reason is not to supply the mind with ideas, but to judge of the connection or disagreement between those already received; so it can only exercise itself on such materials, as those other faculties that hold intelligence with objects, supply it with. This latter is the function of the senses alone, which, for that purpose, are turned outwards towards their proper objects, and set open, as so many avenues and inlets to the ingredients of all our knowledge. It is vain to say we have any proper or immediate idea of spirit and its operations, or that we have any other source of notions, than sensation. When we
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look into ourselves, we plainly perceive spirit represented there, by our idea of some subtile matter ; its operations, by those of body ; and both, not only in our external but internal speech, by terms and signs appropriated to sensible objects. If, then, all our ideas are derived from sensation ; if reason can operate no farther than it has ideas to work on ; and if the divine Being is not the object of any one sense : how much at a loss must reason be, to fix our way of thinking concerning that which it is furnished with no idea of ?

Nevertheless, we may be enabled to form a right idea of God, by him who taught us to believe that the soul of man is formed in the image of God ; which, till it was revealed to us, the force of human reason could not give us a right notion, not to say assurance, of. But, now that this resemblance between God and ourselves is discovered to us, we can lay the foundation of our knowledge here on earth, and raise the superstructure above the highest heavens. When men talk of reason, and represent it as able easily to find out God, they deceive themselves, for want of considering the vast difference between reason uninstructed, undisciplined, and unfurnished with spiritual ideas, and reason already refined by divine and human culture. The bodies and minds of men are so contrived, as to stand in need of continual care and culture. Men come into the world with their minds ignorant, and, what is worse, rude, and prone to wild passions and fierce dispositions. We have not even the full use of our senses, till art and culture have taught us how to employ them. Though the subordinate faculties of the mind should supply the faculty of reason never so plentifully with materials on which it is to operate, yet reason will stand in extreme need of instruction and exercise, to know how to dispose and connect them. You may lay a sufficient quantity of stone and timber, &c. on the spot where you intend to build ; yet if your architect be wholly unexercised and uninstructed, he will give you but an indifferent house.

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Men who live in times and places of ignorance, hardly reason at all, and are little better than brutes, in comparison of such as have been bred up in ages and countries well enlightened. Uneducated and illiterate men are able to reason on few points; and these, only such as relate to their daily occupations and affairs.

It is manifest, that reason stands in great need of instruction, in order to the right performance of her office; and most of all, when she is to weigh propositions, and draw conclusions about objects that are only to be analogically apprehended and considered. The mind of man imports its rules of reasoning, as well as notions, from abroad: and one generation teaches another, not only religion, but all other sciences. The art of reasoning rightly follows instruction, and is progressive and traditional. We can trace it from Syria to Egypt, from Egypt to Greece, from Greece to Italy, and from thence westward and northward to the rest of Europe: while (the Chinese excepted) all the other nations of the earth, who made but little advances in knowledge, lying without the verge of right religious instruction, remained profoundly ignorant. Reason, in them, not meeting with opportunities of culture, the seeds of knowledge lay dead, and produced little or no inventions, and scarcely any improvement in arts and sciences. No country, that we know of, ever became ingenious and learned, from barbarous and ignorant, merely of themselves. In all countries we are acquainted with, knowledge bears an exact proportion to instruction. Why does the learned and well educated, reason better than the mere citizen? why the citizen better than the boor? why the English boor better than the Spanish? why the Spanish better than the Moorish? why the Moorish better than the Negro? and why he better than the Hottentot? If, then, reason is found to go hand in hand, and step by step with education; what would be the consequence, if there were no education? There is no fallacy more gross,
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than to imagine reason, utterly untaught and undisciplined, capable of the same attainments in knowledge, as reason well refined and instructed: or to suppose, that reason can as easily find in itself principles to argue from, as draw the consequences, when once they are found; I mean, especially in respect to objects not perceivable by our senses. In ordinary articles of knowledge, our senses and experience furnish reason with ideas and principles to work on: continual conferences and debates give it exercise in such matters; and that improves its vigour and activity. But, in respect to God, it can have no right idea nor axiom to set out with, till he is pleased to reveal it.

If men, of themselves, should reason from effects to causes; and if one man should form an imperfect idea of the cause or causes of all things; and another should improve on his discovery, a third on his, and so on: How long might it be, before reason could be sufficiently improved, in many, or most men, for an inquiry after the first causes of things? and how many ages must pass, after this improvement, ere all doubts and uncertainties could be cleared up, and the right idea of God found out and fixed? And then, what an immense space of time it would take, to propagate the right idea over all the world, against the current of all its received errors and rooted prejudices, without miracles, and without a ministry, let every candid person judge. What must mankind do all this time for want of a divine law and obligation, the absolute necessity of which we have already considered? Besides, mankind are full as apt to degenerate, as to improve, in religious knowledge. I am sure, we have fewer instances of the latter, than of the former, in such ages and countries as were not kept in sight of the true religion, by a continual series of revelations. If we believe the Jewish and Christian history, we shall be convinced, that all the nations of the world, at first, knew and served the True God; and fell from his worship, in process of time,

time, to that of idols and devils; except the Jews, who were with the greatest difficulty restrained from doing the same, by revelations, miracles and national judgments; and the Christians, whom the clearest lights have not altogether preserved from the encroachments of idolatry. And what instance can be mentioned, from any history, of any one nation under the sun, that emerged from atheism or idolatry, into the knowledge or adoration of the One True God, without the assistance of revelation? The Americans, the Africans, the Tartars, and the ingenious Chinese, have had time enough, one would think, to find out the true and right idea of God; and yet, after above five thousand years improvements, and the full exercise of reason, they have, at this day, got no farther in their progress towards the true religion, than to the worship of stocks and stones and devils. How many thousand years must be allowed to these nations, to reason themselves into the true religion? The Christian religion, it seems, came too late into the world to be true: But natural religion, though not yet arrived, is recommended sufficiently by its truth, antiquity and universality, according to the Deists of the present age. What the light of nature and reason *could* do to investigate the knowledge of God, is best seen by what they *have* already done. We cannot argue more convincingly on any foundation, than that of known and incontestable facts.

Give me leave, therefore, to be particular, in exposing the theology of the Pagans, from the records of their own writers. All the nations of the earth, that were left to themselves, fell, some sooner, and others later, into gross idolatry. At first, they worshipped the luminaries of heaven, and then, their departed kings and benefactors, for gods. Then they made images for them, and, in a little time, terminated the greater part of their adoration in those wooden representatives of their dead deities. It was not long after these first fruits of nature, till they

added to the catalogues of their gods, the most barbarous oppressors, the vilest impostors, the lewdest prostitutes, and the most infamous murderers and parricides the earth ever groaned under. Such deities were to be worshipped with suitable rites and sacrifices. The Salii and Coribantes, priests of Mars and Cybele, performed the ceremonies of those deities, with frantic dances, and outrageous fits of madness. In the rites of Bacchus, not only the priests, but all the people, men, women and children, having their faces smeared with the lees of wine, and being half drunk, ran about the fields, and through the woods, in a most horrible fit of distraction, howling like wild beasts, and frisking from place to place, with such ridiculous and immodest gesticulations, as nothing but the strong possession of some demon could have prompted them to. It was no doubt a most rational kind of religion, that could have put the ancient men, the discreet matrons, and the modest virgins, on such wild extravagancies. Much the same sort of friskings and howlings were used in the ceremonies of many other Heathen gods; and in those of Baal, they were accompanied with a custom most shocking and unnatural. The priests, as they capered about the altar, gashed their flesh with knives and lancets, and ran into furious fits of distraction. The most solemn act of worship performed to the Syrian Baal, by his ordinary devotees, was to break wind, and ease themselves at the foot of his image. The religious rites performed in honour of Venus, in Cyprus, and at Aphae on Mount Libanus, consisted in lewdness of the grossest kinds.

The young people, of both sexes, crowded from all parts, to those sinks of pollution, and, filling the groves and temples with their shameless practices, committed whoredom by thousands, out of pure devotion. All the Babylonian women were obliged to prostitute themselves, once in their lives, at the temple of Venus at Mylitta, to the first man that asked them: and the money earned by this extraordinary

dinary act of devotion, be it more or less, was always esteemed sacred. The nocturnal mysteries at Rome, were not carried to such enormous excesses: but they were nevertheless very scandalous meetings, and gave occasion to all sorts of debaucheries. The devils, whom nature had chosen for her gods, were not contented with drunkenness and lewdness; but they must be worshipped with murder too, and that of the most shocking sort. Human sacrifices were offered up almost in all Heathen countries; and to make them the more acceptable to their good-natured gods, the parents burnt their own children alive, to Baal, Moloch, and many other of their deities. In Britain, and in Gaul, it was a common practice, to surround a man with a kind of wicker work, and burn him to death in honour of their gods. The Scythians sacrificed to Mars, one in every hundred of the captives taken in war. The Peruvians, in their sacrifices, had a custom of tying a living man to a stake, and pulling his flesh off his bones by small pieces, which they broiled, and eat in his sight, believing they did him the greatest honour, in treating him after this manner. The Carthaginians, in times of public calamity, not only burnt alive the children of the best families to Saturn, and that by hundreds; but sometimes sacrificed themselves in the same manner, in great numbers. Oracles, astrology, soothsaying, superstition, magic, &c. overran the whole Heathen world. This might be made appear, by a great variety of quotations from profane writers, who often speak on that topic, just as Amasis did, in his famous letter to Polycrates. A female divinity was always remarkable for her spleen. What the Romans thought of their gods, may be seen by their behaviour on the death of Germanicus. They battered the temples, says Suetonius, with stones; they overthrew the altars of the gods; and flung their household divinities into the street.

Le Compte and Duhald assure us, the Chinese, after offering largely to their gods, and being disappointed

pointed of their assistance, sometimes sue them for damages, and obtain decrees against them from the Mandarins. This ingenious people, when their houses are on fire, to the imminent peril of their wooden gods, hold them to the flames, in hopes of extinguishing them by it. The Tyrians were a wise people; and therefore, when Alexander laid siege to their city, they chained Apollo to Hercules, to prevent his giving them the slip.

The Heathens did not think themselves obliged to be better than their gods; and accordingly, did not only indulge their lusts out of principle, but ran into general customs of the most horrid and abominable nature. Fornication was esteemed no sin among them: nor did they commit sodomy with half the shame or remorse that attend wenching among Christians. They exposed such of their children as they did not like, to be eaten by wild beasts; a cruelty practised at this day by the Hottentots, and some other African nations. Several nations inhabiting the banks of the Danube, were wont to fling their new-born children into the river; and those only that swam were taken out and suckled. The Caribbees frequently castrated their children, that they might grow the fatter, and be the more delicate food. The politest of them were entertained at their public shews, with men killing men. Some nations of them eat human flesh; which is a kind of diet, if we may believe our travellers, much relished by several Pagan nations at this day. Others killed their parents at a certain age, and feasted on their flesh; thinking it the greatest tenderness to relieve them from the miseries of old age, and the highest honour that could be done them, to entomb them in their own bowels. It was a custom in most of the heathen nations, and they say it is sometimes practised at this day, for her who loved her husband more than the rest of his wives, to kill herself at his funeral.

The Persians made no scruple of marrying their own mothers, or daughters: and it was lawful among

mong the Egyptians, for brothers and sisters to marry. Some nations carried out their sick, as soon as they thought their case desperate, and threw them on the ground to perish by the injuries of the wind and weather. Some forced their wives to miscarry, to save the expence of maintaining their children. The women, in the fury of battle, flung their infants on the lances of their enemies, to terrify them with a dreadful idea of their resolution. Revenge and self-murder were not only tolerated, but esteemed heroic by the best of the Heathen. I know not, in all profane history, six more illustrious characters, than those of Lycurgus, Timoleon, Cicero, Cato, Uticensis, Brutus, and Germanicus. The first encouraged tricking and stealing, by an express law. The second, upon principle, murdered his own brother. Cicero, with all his fine talk about religion and virtue, had very little of either; as may appear by what he says (I think it is in a letter to Atticus) on the death of his daughter Tullia, "I hate the very gods, who hitherto have
 " been so profuse in their favours to me;" and by deserting his friends and his country, and turning a servile flatterer to Cæsar. Brutus concludes all his mighty heroism with this exclamation: "Virtue, I
 " have pursued thee in vain, and found thee to be but
 " an empty name;" and then kills himself. Cato's virtue was not strong enough to hinder his turning a public robber and oppressor, (witness his Cyprian expedition); nor to bear up against the calamities of life: and so he stabbed himself, and ran away, like a coward, from his country and the world. Germanicus, who exceeded all men in his natural sweetness of temper, at the approach of death, called his friends about him, and spent his last moments in pressing them to take revenge of Piso and Plencina, for poisoning or bewitching him; in directing them how this might be best done; and in receiving their oaths for the performance of his request. His sense of religion, he thus expressed on that occasion: "Had
 " I died by the decree of fate, I should have had just
 " cause

“ cause of resentment against the gods, for hurrying me
 “ away from my parents, my wife and my children,
 “ in the flower of my youth, by an untimely death.”

Upon consulting the writings of the philosophers, together with their lives and tenets, as given us by their own Pagan histories, I find they knew little of true religion, and practised less. It was owing to the want of higher and better principles than the mere light of nature and reason can suggest, that the ancient philosophers, who carried virtue as high as it was possible without divine assistance, fell into the gross enormities practised by the people among whom they lived. They made all the efforts human strength was capable of, to find out the true object of worship; and came nearer to the discovery, in proportion as they had opportunities, by travelling into the East, of drawing hints from the stream of true tradition. And, after all, none but Socrates and Plato talked of one God, and they but obscurely, speaking at other times in favour of a plurality of gods, and recommending it to their disciples to worship the deities of their country. However, it must be owned, they lived in the main, as if they had better principles of religion than their countrymen and contemporaries. They did enough to shew, that if they had been well acquainted with true religion, they would not have taken long journeys by land, and made dangerous voyages by sea, to visit the celebrated prostitutes of their time. They would never have let out their wives for hire, nor kept their mistresses; nor given the world the strongest reason to think them guilty of greater crimes, than it was possible to commit with the other sex. What a condition must the Pagan world have been in, when the ancient philosophers were esteemed the wisest and best of men? These philosophers, however, had, generally speaking, little sense of religion, and as little sense of moral virtue, or even decency. Many of them were Atheists; as, Diagoras, Theodorus, and Critias. Epicurus denied the spirituality and providence of God, and so did

did all his followers. Aristotle denied his providence as to this lower world. In the opinion of Hippasus and Heraclitus, God was fire : in that of Parmenides, a mixture of fire and earth : in that of Xenophanes, a great impassible sphere of matter. Socrates and Plato were, at least in practice, Polytheists ; so were Cicero and Plutarch ; they holding, among a multiplicity of inferior gods, two supreme deities, the one infinitely good, and the other infinitely evil. The Stoics believed God to be the soul of the world, and that soul to consist of subtile flame. Among the philosophers there were three hundred different opinions concerning their supreme deity ; or rather, as Varro testifies, three hundred Jupiters or supreme deities. The followers of Democritus and Epicurus, denied the immortality of the soul. Pherecides and Pythagoras believed it to be immortal, but gave it in common to brutes, as well as man. The Academics were doubtful as to this important point. Socrates, Plato, and Cicero, who were more inclined to the belief of a future existence, than the other philosophers, plead for it with arguments of no force ; speak of it with the utmost uncertainty ; and therefore, are afraid to found their system of duty and virtue on the expectation of it. Their notions of morality were of a piece with their religion, and had little else for a foundation, than vain-glory. Tully, in his treatise of Friendship, says, that virtue proposes glory as its end, and hath no other reward. Accordingly, he maintains, that wars undertaken for glory, are not unlawful, provided they are carried on without the usual cruelty. Zeno maintained, that all crimes are equal ; that pardon is never to be granted to one who offends or injures us ; and that a man may as lawfully use the utmost familiarities with his mother, as stroke her arm. It was not only his, but likewise the opinion of Cleanthes and Chrylippus, that the horrible sin of using the male for the female, is a thing indifferent. The two former taught, that sons and daughters may as lawfully roast and eat the flesh of
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their parents, as any other food. Diogenes, and the sect of the Cynics, held, that parents have a right to sacrifice and eat their children; and that there is nothing shameful in committing the grossest acts of lewdness publicly, and before the faces of mankind. Epicurus allows of cohabitation with mothers and daughters. Aristippus, though a man of fortune, refused to maintain his own children, regarding them only as the spittle or vermin produced by his body: and as he placed the happiness of a man in the pleasures of a brute; so, to indulge these pleasures, he said, a wise man might commit theft, sacrilege, or adultery, if he had an opportunity. The virtuous sentiments discovered by the philosophers on some occasions, will neither palliate these execrable principles, nor suffer us to think those who could abet them, fit instructors for mankind.

And their practices were like their principles. Socrates and Plato, the very best of them, have not escaped the censure of antiquity, for crimes of the deepest dye. Plutarch also represents Aristotle as a fop, a debauchee, and a traitor to Alexander his master. Dion Cassius is as severe on Seneca the moralist. Lucian, as well as Minutius Felix, represents the sages of antiquity as corrupters of youth, as adulterers and tyrants. Diogenes kept a filthy strumpet, with whom he lay openly in the streets. Speusippus was caught and slain in the act of adultery. Aristippus kept a seraglio of boys and whores; and yet took journeys, at the peril of his life, to see the reigning courtesans of his time. Nor was lewdness his only vice: he actually forswore a sum of money deposited in his hands. Crates, and the female philosopher Hipparchia, made a practice of strolling from place to place, and lying together publicly before multitudes of people. Xenophon not only kept a boy, called Clinias, with whom he was guilty of unnatural pollutions; but practised the same execrable enormity with persons of riper years. Herillus was a filthy pathick in his youth. Cleanthes, Chrysippus, Zeno,

Zeno, Cleombrotus, and Menippus, committed murder on themselves: the last, because he had lost a considerable sum of money, which, as he was an usurer, went a little too near his heart. That I do not charge the philosophers with worse principles and practices, than they themselves maintain, and their own Pagan historians ascribe to them, any one may satisfy himself, who will consult Diogenes, Laertius, Sextus Empiricus, Lucian, Plutarch, and the works of Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero.

Thus, it is plain, whether we consider what the human understanding could do, or what it actually did, that it could not have attained to a sufficient knowledge of God, without revelation; so that the demonstration brought in favour of *some* religion, ends in a demonstration of the *revealed*. When we attentively consider the nature of man, we find it necessary he should have some religion. When we consider the nature of God, we must conclude he never would have made a falsehood necessary to the happiness of his rational creatures; and that therefore there must be a true religion. And when we consider, that, by our natural faculties, it is extremely difficult to arrive at a right idea of God, till he reveals it to us; that all the Gentile world hath run into the grossest theological errors, and, in consequence of these, into the most enormous customs and crimes; and that no legislator ever founded his scheme of civil government on any supposed religious dictates of nature, but always on some real or pretended revelation: We cannot help ascribing all the true religion in the world to divine instruction, and all the frightful variety of religious errors to human invention; and to that dark and degenerate nature, by the imaginary light of which, deists suppose the right idea of God may be easily and universally discovered.

Socrates, who never travelled out of Greece, had nothing to erect a scheme of religion or morality on, but the scattered fragments of truth, handed down from time immemorial among his countrymen, or imported

imported by Pythagoras, Thales, and others, who had been in Egypt and the East. These he picked out from an huge heap of absurdities and errors, under which they were buried; and, by the help of a most prodigious capacity, laying them together, comparing them with the nature of things, and drawing consequences from them, he found reason to question the soundness of the Grecian theology and morality. But this is all the length he seems to have gone. He reasoned extremely well against the prevailing errors of his time; but was able to form no system of religion or morality. This was a work above the strength of his nature, and the lights he enjoyed. He taught his disciples to worship the gods, and to ground the distinction between right and wrong on the laws of their country; in the latter of which he followed the saying of his master, Archelaus, who taught, that what is just or dishonest, is defined by law, not by nature. The notions of Plato concerning the divine nature, were infinitely more sublime and nearer the truth, than those of his master, Socrates. He did not content himself merely with removing errors: He ventured on a system; and maintained, that virtue is a science, and that God is the object and source of duty; that there is but one God, the fountain of all being, and superior to all essence; that he hath a Son, called The Word; that there is a judgement to come, by which the just who have suffered in this life, shall be recompensed in the other, and the wicked punished eternally; that God is omnipresent; and consequently, that the wicked, if he were to dive into the deepest caverns of the earth, or should get wings, and fly into the heavens, would not be able to escape from him: that man is formed in the image of God; and that, in order to establish laws and government, relations made by true traditions and ancient oracles, are to be consulted. These points, so much insisted on by Plato, are far from being the growth of Greece, or his own invention, but derived from Eastern traditions, which we know he travelled for,

for, at least as far as Egypt. He was wiser than his teacher, who was a much greater man, because his lights were better : But, as they were not sufficient, he ran into great errors, speaking plainly as if he believed in a plurality of gods, making gods, women, and children, common, &c.

How should it come to pass, that Mount Taurus in Asia, and Mount Atlas, and the desarts of Barca in Africa, make so great a difference between the knowledge and politeness of the nations dwelling on the one side of them, and those of the nations dwelling on the other ? Is knowledge progressive, and may it be stopped by a mountain, a sea, or a desert ? The natural faculties of men, in all nations, are alike : and did nature itself furnish all men with the means and materials of knowledge, philosophy need never turn traveller, either in order to her own improvement, or to the communication of her lights to the world. How came it to pass that Scythia did not produce so many, so great philosophers, as Greece ? I think it very evident, that the great difference between these countries as to learning and instruction, arose from this : The latter had the benefit of commerce with the Phœnicians, from whence they came by the knowledge of letters, and probably of navigation ; and with the Egyptians, from whom they learned the greater part of their theology, policy, arts and sciences. Such advantages the Scythians wanted ; and therefore, although their natural talents were as good as those of the Grecians, they were not able to make any improvements in philosophy. Why are the Asiatic Scythians at this day as ignorant as ever, while the European Scythians are little inferior to the other nations of Europe in arts and politeness ? And how does it come to pass, that we, at this day, take upon us to approve the philosophy of Socrates and Plato, rather than that of Epicurus and Aristippus ? The Grecians were divided in this matter : some followed the notions of the former, and others those of the latter. Why did not reason put the matter out

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of question in those times, or at least immediately after? The infinite contradictions and uncertainties among the ancient philosophers produced the sects of the Sceptics. In respect to religion, Socrates and Plato either were, or pretended to be, sceptics, beating down the absurd notions of others, but seldom building up any thing of their own; or, when they did, building on mere conjectures, or arguments suspected by themselves.

If it be said, the finding out of truth by the light of nature, is a work of time; time hath taught the Tartars, Africans and Americans, little or nothing of true theology or morality, even yet. Time, of itself, can search nothing. It was the Christian religion that opened the eyes of the polite nations of Europe, and even of the deists of this age, wherein their eyes are still open, and they have any true principles by which they are able to examine the philosophy of the ancients, and, by comparing their several opinions one with another, and with the truths derived from the Christian revelation, to decide in favour of some against the rest. Men are very apt to take that for the spontaneous produce of their own minds, which they were early taught, and long habituated to; and to call that the effect of nature, which was instilled insensibly into them, before they began to consider how notices and informations came in, or to keep any registry in their memories of the times when this or that addition to their fund of knowledge was made. But any man, who considers the matter candidly, will find, that the principles of all he knows, concerning either the authority or nature of morality, were communicated to him by instruction.

Lord Shaftesbury himself says, "Few men are thinkers; and of those that are, some are vastly less able to manage their thoughts than others." Although, in the original frame of human nature, reason was the governing power or faculty of the mind, and ought to be so still: yet, like a weak prince, she is, in most men, dethroned by her usurping subjects,

jects, and that on account of inability to enforce her dictates; insomuch, that for once she issues any orders of her own, she is an hundred times either coaxed or compelled to lend her name and authority to the grossest extravagances and vilest crimes; and not only that, but to exert all the little ability that is left her, to find out ways and means to execute, and false arguments to palliate, the excesses committed by the under faculties, the instinct, the sentiments, the passions and appetites to which she is enslaved. She is ever giving proofs of her inability to determine points of the greatest plainness, and yet presuming to examine and pronounce most peremptorily about mysteries and other matters, which, in her highest power and perfection, she was utterly unable to form any competent judgement of. Were she able rightly to direct the conscience, and affix its approbation to actions really good in themselves, and its dislike even to the worst of crimes, she had never suffered whole nations to offer human sacrifices to their gods, to kill and eat their own parents, and the very wisest and politest of them to destroy their own children, and to feast their eyes at their public diversions with the blood and slaughter of their fellow-creatures. If she be not capable of approving the most horrible enormities, why does she, in this late age of the world, when she hath had time enough, one would think, to open her eyes, and come to a right sense of religion and morality, suffer the Americans and Africans to worship the devil; and even Christians, contrary to the express and repeated dictates of their religion, to hate, and persecute, and burn one another for God's sake?

As to the doctrine of THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL; it is certain nothing can be more agreeable to reason, when once the doctrine is proposed and thoroughly canvassed; while, at the same time, there is no one probable opinion in the world, which mankind, left entirely to themselves, would have been

more unlikely to have started. Who, if he was not assured of it by good authority, would ever take it into his head to imagine, that man, who dies, and rots, and vanishes for ever, like all other animals, still exists? It is well, if this, when proposed, can be believed; but, to strike out the thought itself, is somewhat, I am afraid, too high and difficult for the capacity of men. The only natural argument, of any weight, for the immortality of the soul, takes its rise from this observation, that justice is not extended to the good, nor executed upon the bad man in this life; and that, as the Governor of the world is just, man must live hereafter to be judged. But as this only argument that can be drawn from mere reason, in order either to lead us to a discovery of our own immortality, or to support the opinion of it when once started, is founded entirely on the knowledge of God and his attributes; and as we have already seen, that such knowledge is almost unattainable by the present light of nature, the argument itself, which, before the fall, could not possibly have been thought of, is, since the fall, clogged with all the difficulties mere reason labours under, in finding out a right idea of God. And besides, this argument in itself, is utterly inconclusive, on the principles of the deists of our age and nation: because they insist that virtue fully rewards, and vice fully punishes itself. It is no wonder that many heathen nations believed a future state, as they received it by tradition from their ancestors. But yet, there is this evidence that mankind had not this doctrine merely from the easy and plain dictates of reason and nature, that many did not believe it. Herodotus informs us, that of all the Scythian nations, there was but one (if I remember, it was that of the Getæ; who were taught by their countryman Zamolxis, the disciple of Pythagoras), that believed this doctrine. The Sadducees among the Jews, and not only the Epicureans, but several other sects of philosophers among the Greeks and Romans, were firmly persuaded that there is no life after

idolatry as bad as Atheism, and wickedness worse
 than brutality, were established for religion and law
 in all countries. The philosophers who lived in the
 most knowing countries, and sought for religion and
 moral truth, but sought in vain, as the wisest of them
 confess, render this argument still more cogent and
 conclusive. I need not be particular in order to show
 this, by recounting to you their infinite absurdities
 and eternal contradictions. Nor need I tell you, that
 Elin says, man could know nothing without instruc-
 tion: That Plutarch asserts, he would be the wisdest
 of all animals, if wholly left to himself: That all the
 ancient heathen poets, historians, and philosophers,
 represent the first men as the most fierce, outrageous
 race of savages in all the woods: That Plato calls phi-
 losophy, by which they were civilized, the gift, and
 Cicero, the invention, of the gods: That Jamblicus,
 observing the ignorance of the human nature, con-
 fesses there is no remedy for all its errors, but some por-
 tion of divine instruction or light: That as to moral
 obligation, Plato asserts, That "there are no such
 things by nature as just things, inasmuch as men
 "perpetually differ in opinion about them, and are
 "for ever contriving new standards to distinguish
 "right from wrong; and that therefore there can be
 "no law, except God gives it to us: "That Socrates,
 Aristippus, Diogenes, Pyrrho, refer the distinction
 between right and wrong to the laws of society; and
 that all legislators founded the obligation and autho-
 rity of social laws upon either real or pretended reve-
 lations. If you would have further satisfaction on
 these heads, and desire to have it proved to you, that
 all the little advances made among the Greeks in
 theology or morality, were derived from Egyptian,
 Phœnician, and Syrian traditions, either oral or
 written, and brought into Greece and Italy, by Thales,
 Pythagoras, Plato, and others, you may
 at your leisure consult Gale's Court of the Gentiles.
 Thus I think it is evident, that through mere unassisted
 nature in its perfect blindness and corruption, we

by way of dream, that those who served their country, and cultivated justice and the other virtues, should go to heaven after death : But that the souls of those that had violated the laws of the gods and men, should, after leaving their bodies, be tossed about on the earth, and not return to heaven for many ages. Now, if a person of Cicero's abilities and learning could, from the light of nature, work out no better scheme than this, which renders futurity almost useless to moral obligation, how much farther from truth and reason must we suppose the bulk of mankind to stray, if each ignorant person is to be left entirely to his own thoughts and discoveries, in respect to the future rewards of virtue, and punishments of vice ?

As to the expectations which the people had of future rewards and punishments, which appears by their historians and poets ; these they could have

borrowed from nothing else but tradition.

Plato, who makes all religious knowledge to depend on revelation, either drew his theory of futurity from his travels into countries bordering on the light of revelation, and the hints of those who were not altogether unacquainted with the sacred writings, and religion of the Israelites : or else he received it from the crude opinions of his countrymen ; extracting and separating, by the force of amazing talents, what was original and true, from what was novel and

superstitious.

Thus, upon considering the extent and strength of human faculties, we have found them at present utterly incapable of attaining to any competent notion of a divine law, if left wholly to themselves. This is vastly confirmed by experience ; from which it appears, that mankind, instead of being able, through a long series of ages, by the mere light of nature, to find out a right idea of God and his laws ; on the contrary, after having, without doubt, been well acquainted at first with both, gradually, and at length almost universally, lost sight of both ; in so much, that

idolatry

"its motion from any thing else, and therefore must
 "move, and consequently exist for ever."
 "The law of nature must be extremely defective, if
 it do not give us full assurances of very great rewards
 and punishments in another life for what we do here.
 And the light of nature hath been so far from do-
 ing this, that it hath suffered whole nations to remain
 for several ages in perfect ignorance of this important
 truth, and hath suffered the greater part of its most
 unerring oracles, the philosophers, to deny it; and
 to the reproach of self-sufficient and overweening na-
 ture, hath put little in the mouths of those few that
 believed it, to defend it with, but nonsense and so-
 phistry; although nature had done her utmost, and
 human literature had lent her assistance to make them
 the greatest men in the world. The wisdom of So-
 crates and Plato united, produce such arguments for
 a most favourite opinion, as they themselves are dis-
 satisfied with, and therefore call for more than hu-
 man help. Cicero being so fond of this opinion, that
 as he says, he would rather err with Plato in hold-
 ing it, than think rightly with those who deny it,
 poorly echoes the arguments of Plato; adds little to
 them himself; and, at the conclusion, in a manner
 giving up the point, with all the arguments brought
 to support it, endeavours to comfort himself and o-
 thers against the approach of death, by proving death
 to be no evil, even supposing the soul to perish with
 the body.
 And this great philosopher, with all his knowledge,
 gives but one lot to the good and evil in another life.
 It was his opinion, *If the soul is immortal, it must be hap-
 py: if it perishes with the body, it cannot be miserable.*
 This consolation he administers alike to all men, with-
 out making any distinction, and consequently leaves
 moral obligation on a mere temporal footing, which,
 in effect, is not a whit better than downright atheism.
 But in his dream of Scipio, when he does not reason
 nor seem to inculcate any particular doctrine, he in-
 deed introduces the elder Scipio telling the younger,

by

after this. Nay, Socrates, in the Phædon of Plato, says, most men were of opinion, that the soul, upon its separation from the body, is dissipated and reduced to nothing. And Tully, in his first Tusculan question, says, Phærides Syrus, preceptor to Pythagoras, was the first person known to the learned world, who taught the immortality of the soul. The other arguments brought by Plato and Cicero for the immortality of the soul, besides that already mentioned, are very inconclusive. They themselves thought so. The treatise of Old Age makes the elder Cato talk of it as an opinion he was fond of, rather than as a doctrine he could demonstrate; and comforts himself, after enumerating all the arguments he could think of for it, with this reflection upon the whole, that, if the soul dies with the body, the petty philosophers, who opposed themselves to the opinion of the soul's immortality, ceasing to be as well as he, would not laugh at his credulity. The former, in his Phædon, makes Socrates speak with some doubt concerning his own arguments, and introduces Simias, saying to Socrates, after having listened to his principal reasonings, "We ought to lay hold of the strongest arguments for this doctrine, that either we ourselves, or others can suggest to us. If both ways prove ineffectual, we must however put up with the best proofs we can get, till some promise or revelation shall clear up the point to us." One of Plato's arguments for the immortality of the soul, is this: "Every cause produces an effect contrary to itself; and that, therefore, as life produces death, the soul will exist after it is separated from the body, endeavours to prove that it existed before it was joined to it; and to that end he insists, "that what we call apsects in children to learn, is nothing more than memory." Another argument of Plato, is this: "That alone which moves itself, inasmuch as it is never deflected by itself, never ceases to move: but the mind moves itself, and borrows not

can neither have a religion nor a law sufficient to answer the ends of society, or to render individuals good and happy; and that we may therefore say with Cicero, in his third book *de natura Deorum*, "If it is a thing agreed on by all the philosophers, that no man attains to true wisdom, we are all in a most wretched condition, although it is said that God hath taken the utmost care to provide for our happiness. For as it is the same thing whether nobody is in health, or whether nobody hath it in his power to be in health; so to me there is no difference, whether no man is wise, or no man can be wise."

As the apostle Paul observes in the first chapter of his epistle to the Romans, men did not like to retain God in their knowledge; and, professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. Thus were their foolish hearts darkened; upon which God gave them over to a reprobate mind, and gave them up to uncleanness, to sins of all kinds, even such as were utterly against nature.

St Chrysostom, in his descant on this passage, says, "The Gentiles fell into a kind of madness, in so much, that having deprived themselves of the light, and involved their minds in the darkness of their own thoughts, their attempt to travel towards heaven ended in a miserable shipwreck, as his must do, who, in a dark night, undertakes a voyage by sea." This is a true representation of St Paul's meaning, in which the Gentiles stand charged with departing from the light and reason bestowed on them by God, and plunging themselves into such a state of ignorance, as they were never afterwards able to extricate themselves out of. Being guided by conceit, and too great an attachment to sensible things, they entered upon a wrong way; so that, still the longer they travelled, the farther they wandered from the

the knowledge of the true God, and right religion. The doctrine of St Paul, concerning the blindness into which the Gentiles fell, is so confirmed by the state of religion in Africa, America, and even China, where, to this day, no advances towards the true religion have been made, that we can no longer be at a loss to judge of the insufficiency of unassisted reason, to dissipate the prejudices of the Heathen world, and open their eyes to religious truths.

If our knowledge of God had come by observation and philosophy, it must have risen by degrees from a discovery of causes by their effects. Thus must reason, in its inquiry after God, have proceeded; and its last deductions must have been more perfect than its first. If the works of creation can, in our present blind condition, easily discover to us the being and attributes of God, surely they must be still better qualified to support that discovery after it is made, and to correct any mistakes that might have arisen in the making of it, which is an easier matter, by far, than the discovery itself. But St Paul gives us quite another history of the business. He says, that *from the creation, and now, the invisible things of God are clearly seen*, and afterwards, through philosophy, and the boasted wisdom of man, almost wholly lost, or changed into idolatry, worse in itself than even total ignorance. This seems plainly to intimate, that our knowledge of God did not take its rise from mere reason, but from revelation, or at least from extraordinary power or faculty in the nature of our first parents, which their posterity are destitute of, and which, to suppose in respect to our present debate, is the same thing as to suppose revelation.

Nothing but revelation and faith can, with any certainty, teach us, that the things that are seen, viz. matter, and all its various modifications, were made out of things that do not appear, *i. e.* out of nothing, and by a pure spirit. Philosophy could hardly have beat out so inconceivable a mystery; but must have either concluded matter to have been eternal, or must have

have supposed its efficient cause to have been material. This we see verified by experience. The Heathens, as Porphyry himself acknowledges, never ascribed the creation of the world to God; but maintained, either that the universe is God, or that its matter was coeval with God. "If we look back, (says the learned Shuckford), and make a fair inquiry, we shall find, that the ancient wise men did not fall into their errors by paying too great a deference to tradition and pretended revelations; but by setting up what they thought a reasonable scheme of religion in opposition to the traditional, and that the frame and course of nature was not sufficiently understood, to make men masters of true philosophy." The same author further observes, "that there is nothing so extravagant and ridiculous, which men of the greatest parts and eminency for the natural strength of their understandings, have not defended; as is evident by what Plato and Plutarch have said in vindication of the Egyptian superstitions." As for the latter, he says in his book concerning Isis and Osiris, "that there is nothing in the Heathen mythology unreasonable, idle, or superstitious; and that a good, moral, historical or philosophical reason may be given for every part of every fable therein." Socrates and Plato, indeed, saw an infinite deal of absurdity, and even wickedness, in the Pagan worship; yet, having no thorough assurances of a better, and seeing plainly the necessity of religion, they laboured to correct that of their own country. But as for Cicero and Plutarch, they both of them had a warm zeal for the superstitions they were educated in; especially the latter; who, it must be confessed, was one of the wisest and greatest men that ever enriched the commonwealth of letters. If such men as these were capable of thinking so like the vulgar and illiterate; how could the more ignorant, *i. e.* almost the whole race of mankind, have beat out, from their own observation,

servation, a right notion of God, and their duty to him?

The starting a proposition is one thing, and the proof of it quite another. Every science has its proofs in the nature of things. Yet all sciences require to be taught; and those require it most, the first principles of which ly a little out of the reach of ordinary capacities. The first principles of religion, being of an high and spiritual nature, are harder to be found out than those of any other science; because the minds of men are gross and earthly, used to objects of sense; and all their depraved appetites and corrupt dispositions, which are by nature opposite to the true religion, help to increase the natural weakness of their reason, and clip the wings of their contemplation, when they endeavour, by their own strength, to soar towards God and heavenly things. No man in his, nor hardly in any other time, knew better how to catch at the evidence of divine truths discovered in the works of creation, nor had better opportunities, than Plato. Yet, with all the help he derived from foreign and domestic instruction, he finds himself on every occasion at a loss. When he speaks of God and divine matters, he relies on oracles, traditions, and revelations; and having got a little taste of this kind of instruction, is every now and then confessing his want of more, and withing for it with the greatest anxiety.

If a few persons of superior talents and application should discover the true religion, this could be of little use; because, merely by their own efforts, and without the assistance of miracles and grace, they could never so propagate their discovery, or convert the world thereunto. The wisest of the Heathen sages made our knowledge of God to depend, not on philosophical inquiries, but on tradition. Plato is full of reflections to this purpose; and, not thinking the traditions which he was acquainted with sufficient, he talks of a future instructor to be sent from God, to teach the world a more perfect knowledge of religious

ligious duties. "The truth is," (says he, speaking in his first book *De Legibus*, concerning future rewards and punishments), "to determine or establish any thing certain about these matters, in the midst of so many doubts and disputations, is the work of God only." In his *Phædon*, one of the speakers says to Socrates concerning the *Immortality of the Soul*, "I am of the same opinion with you, that in this life, it is either absolutely impossible, or extremely difficult, to arrive at a clear knowledge in this matter." In the apology he wrote for Socrates, he puts these words into his mouth, on the subject of reformation of manners: "You may pass the remainder of your days in sleep, or despair of finding out a sufficient expedient for this purpose, if God, in his providence, doth not send you some other instructor." And in his *Epinomis* he says, "Let no man take upon him to teach, if God do not lead the way." In the book *De Mundo*, ascribed to Aristotle, we have a remarkable passage to this effect: "It is an old tradition, almost universally received, that all things proceeded from God, and subsist through him; and that no nature is self-sufficient, or independent of God's protection and assistance." In his *Metaphysics*, he ascribes the belief of the gods, and of this, that the Deity compasses and comprehends all nature, to a traditionary habit of speaking, handed down from the first men to after ages. Cicero, in his treatise concerning the nature of the gods, introduces Cotta blaming those who endeavoured, by argumentation, to prove there are gods, and affirming that this only served to make the point doubtful, which, by the instructions and traditions of their forefathers, had been sufficiently made known to them, and established. Plutarch, speaking of the worship paid to a certain ideal-divinity, which his friend had called in question, says, "It is enough to believe pursuant to the faith of our ancestors, and the instructions communicated to us in the country where we were

“ born and bred ; than which, we can neither find
 “ out, nor apply, any argument more to be depend-
 “ ed on.”

It will be further useful to observe, that the thoughts of men, with regard to any internal law, will be always mainly influenced by their sentiments concerning the *Chief Good*. Whatsoever power or force may do in respect to the outward actions of a man, nothing can oblige him to think or act, as often as he is at liberty, against what he takes to be his chief good or interest. No law, nor system of laws, can possibly answer the end and purpose of a law, till the grand question, what is the chief happiness and end of man, be determined, and so cleared up, that every man may be fully satisfied about it. Before our Saviour's time, the world was infinitely divided on this important head. The philosophers were miserably bewildered in all their researches after the chief good. Each sect, each subdivision of a sect, had a chief good of its own, and rejected all the rest. They advanced, as Varro tells us, no fewer than 288 opinions in relation to this matter ; which shews, by a strong experiment, that the light of nature was altogether unable to settle the difficulty. Every man, if left to the particular bias of his own nature, chooses out a chief good for himself, and lays the stress of all his thoughts and actions on it. Now, if the supposed chief good of any man should lead him, as it often does, to violate the laws of society, to hurt others, and act against the general good of mankind, he will be very unfit for society ; and consequently, as he cannot subsist out of it, an enemy to himself. Robbers, thieves, assassins, rebels, are all instances of this. And so are also those more cunning, but more dangerous persons, who know how to evade the laws, or even by their assistance to gain unjust advantages to themselves, and hurt society. After the corruption of nature, the light of nature is become too dim for the discovery of true religion. But whatever informations it was qualified to give us, it must have made

made a most unequal distribution of them, in proportion to the great inequality of mens capacities. So imperfect was this light, so feeble and uncertain, that society and civil government could in no country rest upon it: and so unequally was it dispensed to different countries, and different individuals, that if this is an objection of any weight, it lies more strongly against natural than against revealed religion; and therefore, better fits the mouth of an Atheist than a Deist. Can an instance be given, of any country, in which some, either real or pretended revelation, was not the established religion, and the basis of civil society? Is there any historian or traveller, that gives information of any people who believe nothing concerning God, but what each man draws from within himself; or who do not follow the customs and traditions of their forefathers in matters of religion? If Christianity came too late into the world, what is called natural religion came full as late; and there are no footsteps of natural religion, in any sense of the words, to be found at this day, but where Christianity hath been planted. In every place else, religion hath no conformity with reason or truth. So far is the light of nature from lending sufficient assistance. It is strange, that the natural light should be so clear, and yet the natural darkness so great, that in all unassisted countries the most monstrous forms of religion, derogatory to God, and prejudicial to man, should be contrived by some, and swallowed by the rest, with a most voracious credulity. I could wish most heartily, that all nations were Christians; yet, since it is otherwise, we derive this advantage from it, that we have a standing and contemporary demonstration of that which nature, left to herself, can do. Had all the world been Christians for some ages past, our present libertines would insist, that Christianity had done no service to mankind; that nature could have sufficiently directed herself; and that all the stories told, either in sacred or profane history, of the idolatry and horrible forms of religion in an-

cient times, were forged by Christian priests, to make the world think revelation necessary, and natural reason incapable of dictating true and right notions of religion. But, as the case stands at present, we have such proofs of the insufficiency of unassisted reason in this behalf, as all the subtilty of libertines is unable to evade.

All that the Grecians, Romans, and present Chinese, know of true religion, they were taught traditionally. As to their corrupt notions and idolatries, they were of their own invention. The Grecians, who were by far the most knowing people of the three, were as gross idolaters as the rest, till Plato's time. He travelled into the east, and came home with better notions of theology, (which he derived from tradition), than the other philosophers of his time were masters of. He ran higher towards truth in his sentiments of religion, than others: but still worshipped the gods of his country, and durst not speak out all he knew. However, he formed a great school, and, both through his writings and scholars, instructed his countrymen in a kind of religious philosophy, that tended much more directly and strongly to reformation of manners, than either the dictates of their own reason, or of their other philosophers. Some true religion there must be; and there can be but one. This religion must be fitted to the wants of all men, and ought to be universal. Now, amongst all the religions hitherto known or heard of, there never was one which did not require to be taught and learned. The Deists say, their religion is that of nature, and universally known without teaching. Yet the world hath been always trusting to real or pretended revelations, and knew nothing of an untaught religion, till about a century ago, that some Deists began to set up a new one, which, if we may believe themselves, needed not to have been taught, because every body knew it before. All the philosophy of the Gentile nations, excepting that of Socrates and Plato, was derived from the source of self-sufficiency.

sufficiency. Only these two acknowledge the blindness of human nature, and the necessity of a divine instructor. No other Heathen philosopher founded his morality on any sense of religion, or ever dreamt of an inability in man to render himself happy.

87. *Definition*: By reason, I mean that power or faculty an intelligent being has to judge of the truth of propositions; either immediately, by only looking on the propositions, which is judging by intuition and self-evidence; or by putting together several propositions, which are already evident by intuition, or at least whose evidence is originally derived from intuition.

Great part of Tindal's arguing, in his *Christianity as old as the creation*, proceeds on this ground, That since reason is the judge whether there be any revelation, or whether any pretended revelation be really such; therefore reason, without revelation, or undirected by revelation, must be the judge concerning each doctrine and proposition contained in that pretended revelation: which is an unreasonable way of arguing. It is as much as to say, that seeing reason is to judge of the truth of any general proposition, therefore, in all cases, reason alone, without regard to that particular proposition, is to judge separately and independently of each particular proposition implied in, or depending and consequent upon, that general proposition. For, whether any supposed or pretended divine revelation be indeed such, is a general proposition: and the particular truths delivered in and by it, are particular propositions implied in, and consequent on, that general one. Tindal supposes each of these truths must be judged of by themselves, independently of our judging of that general truth, that the revelation that declares them is the word of God; evidently supposing, that if each of these propositions, thus judged of particularly, cannot be found to be agreeable to reason, or if reason alone will not shew the truth of them; then, that general proposition which

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they

they depend on, viz. That the word which declares them is a divine revelation, is to be rejected: which is most unreasonable, and contrary to all the rules of common sense, and of the proceeding of all mankind, in their reasoning and judging of things in all affairs whatsoever.

For this is certain, that a proposition may be evidently true, or we may have good reason to receive it as true, though the particular propositions that depend upon it, and follow from it, may be such, that our reason, independent of it, cannot see the truth, or can see it to be true by no other means, than by first establishing that other truth which it depends upon. For otherwise, there is an end of all use of our reasoning powers; an end of all arguing one proposition from another; and nothing is to be judged true, but what appears true by looking on it directly and immediately, without the help of another proposition first established, on which the evidence of it depends.

For therein consists all reasoning or argumentation whatsoever; viz. in discovering the truth of a proposition, whose truth does not appear to our reason immediately, or when we consider it alone, but by the help of some other proposition on which it depends.

If this be not allowed, we must believe nothing at all, but only self-evident propositions, and then we must have done with all such things as arguments: and all argumentation whatsoever, and all Tindal's argumentations in particular, are absurd. He himself, throughout his whole book, proceeds in that very method which this principle explodes. He argues, and attempts to prove, or make evident, one proposition, by another first established.

There are some general propositions, the truth of which can be known only by reason, from whence an infinite multitude of other propositions are inferred, and reasonably and justly determined to be true, and rested in as such, on the ground of the truth of
that

that general proposition from which they are inferred by the common consent of all mankind, being led thereto by the common and universal sense of the human mind. And yet not one of those propositions can be known to be true by reason, if reason consider them by themselves independently of that general proposition.

Thus, for instance, what numberless truths are known only by consequence from that general proposition, that the testimony of our senses may be depended on? Tindal says, p. 157. "Reason is to judge whether our senses are deceived." The truth of numberless particular propositions, cannot be known by reason, considered independently of the testimony of our senses, and without an implicit faith in that testimony. That general truth, that the testimony of our memories is worthy of credit, can be proved only by reason; and yet, what numberless truths are there, which we know no other way, and cannot be known to be true by reason, considering the truths in themselves, or any otherwise than by testimony of our memory, and an implicit faith in this testimony? That the agreed testimony of all we see, and converse with continually, is to be credited, is a general proposition, the truth of which can be known only by reason. And yet, how infinitely numerous propositions do men receive as truth, that cannot be known to be true by reason, viewing them separately from such testimony; even all occurrences, and matters of fact, persons, things, actions, works, events, circumstances, and all existence that we are told of in our neighbourhood, in our own country, or in any other part of the world that we have not seen ourselves?

That the testimony of history and tradition is to be depended on, when attended with such and such credible circumstances, is a general proposition, whose truth can be known only by reason. And yet, how numberless are the particular truths concerning what has been before the present age, that cannot be known by reason, considered in themselves, and separately from

from this testimony, which yet are truths of this sort, and so circumstanced, that all mankind do, ever did, and ever will rely on the truth of them?

That the experience of mankind is to be depended on; or, that those things which the world finds to be true by experience, are worthy to be judged true; is a general proposition, which none doubt of: and, by what the world finds true by experience, can be meant nothing else, than what is known to be true by one or other of those forementioned kinds of testimony, viz. the testimony of history and tradition; the testimony of those we see and converse with; the testimony of our memories; and the testimony of our senses. I say, all that is known by the experience of mankind, is known only by one or more of these testimonies; excepting only the existence of that idea, or those few ideas, which are at this moment present in our minds, or are the immediate objects of present consciousness. And yet, how unreasonable would it be to say, that we must first know those things to be true by reason, before we give credit to our experience of the truth of them? Not only are there innumerable truths, that are reasonably received as following from such general propositions as have been mentioned, which cannot be known by reason, if they are considered by themselves, or otherwise than as inferred from these general propositions; but also, many truths are reasonably received, and are received by the common consent of the reason of all rational persons, as undoubted truths, whose truth not only would not otherwise be discoverable by reason, but, when they are discovered by their consequence from that general proposition, appear in themselves not easy and reconcileable to reason, but difficult, incomprehensible, and their agreement with reason not understood. So that men, at least most men, are not able to explain, or conceive of, the manner in which they are agreeable to reason.

Thus, for instance, it is a truth, which depends on that general proposition, that credit is to be given
to

to the testimony of our senses, that our souls and bodies are so united, that they act on each other. But it is a truth which reason otherwise cannot discover, and, now that it is revealed by the testimony of our senses, reason cannot comprehend, or explain, or shew, or conceive of any way, That what is immaterial, and not solid nor extended, can act upon matter, which it cannot touch; and that matter acts upon that. Or, if any choose to say, that the soul is material, then other difficulties arise as great. For reason cannot imagine any way, that a solid mass of matter, whether at rest or in motion, should have perception, and should understand, and should exert thought and volition, love, hatred, &c.

And if it be said that spirit acts on matter, and matter on spirit, by an established law of the Creator, which is no other than a fixed method of his own producing effects; still the manner how it is possible to be, will be inconceivable. We can have no conception of any way or manner, in which God, who is a pure Spirit, can act upon matter, and impel it.

There are several things in mechanics and hydrostatics, that by the testimony of our senses are true in fact, not only that reason never first discovered before the testimony of sense declared them, but, now they are declared, are very great paradoxes, and, if proposed, would seem contrary to reason, at least to the reason of the generality of mankind, and such as are not either mathematicians, or of more than common penetration, and what they cannot reconcile to their reason. But God has given reason to the common people, to be as much their guide and rule, as he has to mathematicians and philosophers.

Even the very existence of a sensible world, which we receive for certain from the testimony of our senses, is attended with difficulties and seeming inconsistencies with reason, which are insuperable by the reason, at least of most men. For, if there be a sensible world, that world either exists in the mind only, or out of the mind, independent of its imagination

nation or perception. If the latter, then that sensible world is some material substance, altogether diverse from all the ideas we have by any of our senses, colour, or visible extension and figure, which is nothing but the quantity of colour and its various limitation, which are sensible qualities that we have by sight; and also diverse from any of the sensible qualities we have by other senses; as that solidity, which is an idea we have by feeling, and that extension and figure, which is only the quantity and limitation of these; and so of all other qualities.

But that there should be any substance entirely distinct from any, or all of these, is utterly inconceivable. For, if we exclude all colour, solidity, or conceivable extension, dimension and figure, what is there left, that we can conceive of? Is there not a removal in our minds of all existence, and a perfect emptiness of every thing? But, if it be said, that the sensible world has no existence, but only in the mind, then the sensories themselves, or the organs of sense, by which sensible ideas are let into the mind, have no existence but only in the mind; and those organs of sense have no existence, but what is conveyed into the mind by themselves; for they are a part of the sensible world. And then it will follow, that the organs of sense owe their existence to the organs of sense, and so are prior to themselves, being the causes or occasions of their own existence; which is a seeming inconsistency with reason, that, I imagine, the reason of all men cannot explain and remove.

There are innumerable propositions, that we reasonably receive from the testimony of experience, all depending on the truth of that general proposition, that experience is to be relied on, (what is meant by experience has been already explained), that yet are altogether above reason, and are paradoxes attended with such seeming inconsistencies with reason, that reason cannot clearly remove, nor fully explain the mystery.

By

By experience, we know there is such a thing as thought, love, hatred, &c. But yet this is attended with inexplicable difficulties. If there be such a thing as thought and affection, where are they? If they exist, they exist in some place, or no place. That they should exist, and exist in no place, is above our comprehension. It seems a contradiction, to say, they exist, and yet exist nowhere. And, if they exist in some place, then they are not in other places, or in all places; and therefore must be confined, at one time, to one place, and that place must have certain limits; from whence it will follow, that thought, love, &c. have some figure, either round, or square, or triangular; which seems quite disagreeable to reason, and utterly inconsonant to the nature of such things as thought and the affections of the mind.

It is evident, by experience, that something now is. But this proposition is attended with things that reason cannot comprehend, and which are paradoxes that seem contrary to reason; knots, that reason cannot clearly untie.

For, if something now is, then either something was from all eternity, or something began to be, without any cause or reason of its existence. The last seems wholly inconsistent with natural sense: And the other, viz. That something has been from all eternity, implies, that there has been a duration past, which is without any beginning, which is an infinite duration: which is perfectly inconceivable, and is attended with difficulties that seem contrary to reason. For we cannot conceive how an infinite duration can be made greater, any more than how a line of infinite length can be made longer. But yet we see, that past duration is continually added to. If there were a duration past without beginning, a thousand years ago, then that past infinite duration has now a thousand years added to it: And, if so, it is greater than it was before by a thousand years; because the whole is greater than a part. Now, the past duration consists of two parts, viz. that which was before the last

last thousand years, and that which is since. Thus here are seeming contradictions, involved in this supposition of an infinite duration past.

And, moreover, if something has been from eternity, it is either an endless succession of causes and effects, as, for instance, an endless succession of fathers and sons, or something equivalent. But the supposition is attended with manifold apparent contradictions: or, there must have been some eternal self-existent being, having the reasons of his existence within himself: or, he must have existed from eternity, without any reason of his existence: both which are inconceivable. That a thing should exist from eternity, without any reason why it should be so, rather than otherwise, is altogether inconceivable, and seems quite repugnant to reason. And why a being should be self-existent, and have the reason of his existence within himself, seems also inconceivable, and never, as I apprehend, has yet been explained. If there has been any thing from eternity, then that past eternity is either an endless duration of successive parts, as successive hours, minutes, &c.; or it is an eternal duration without succession. The latter seems repugnant to reason, and incompatible with any faculty of understanding that we enjoy: And the other, an infinite number of successive parts, involves the very same contradictions with the supposition of an eternal succession of fathers and sons.

That the world has existed from eternity without a cause, seems wholly inconsistent with reason. In the first place, it is inconsistent with reason, that it should exist without a cause. For it is evident, that it is not a thing, the nature and manner of which is necessary in itself; and therefore it requires a cause or reason out of itself, why it is so, and not otherwise. And, in the next place, if it exists from eternity, then succession has been from eternity; which involves the forementioned contradictions. But, if it be without a cause, and does not exist from eternity, then it has been created out of nothing; which is altogether

together inconceivable, and what reason cannot shew to be possible; and many of the greatest philosophers have supposed it plainly inconsistent with reason. Many other difficulties might be mentioned as following from that proposition, that something now is, that are insuperable by reason.

It is evident, by experience, that great evil, both moral and natural, abounds in the world. It is manifest, that great injustice, violence, treachery, perfidiousness, and extreme cruelty to the innocent, abound in the world; as well as innumerable extreme sufferings, issuing finally in destruction and death, are general all over the world, in all ages. But this could not otherwise have been known by reason, and even now is attended with difficulties, which the reason of many, yea most, of the learned men and greatest philosophers that have been in the world, have not been able to surmount. That it should be so ordered or permitted in a world, absolutely and perfectly under the care and government of an infinitely holy and good God, discovers a seeming repugnancy to reason, that few, if any, have been able fully to remove.

That men are to be blamed or commended for their good or evil voluntary actions, is a general proposition received, with good reason, by the dictates of the natural, common, and universal moral sense of mankind in all nations and ages: which moral sense is commonly plainly included in what Tindal means by reason and the law of nature. And yet many things attend this truth, that appear difficulties and seeming repugnancies to reason, which have proved altogether insuperable to the reason of many of the greatest and most learned men in the world.

I observe, further, that when any general proposition is recommended to us as true, by any testimony or evidence, that, considered by itself, seems sufficient, without contrary testimony or evidence to countervail it; and difficulties attend that proposition: if these difficulties are no greater, and of no other

sort, than what might reasonably be expected to attend true propositions of that kind, then these difficulties are not only no valid or sufficient objection against that proposition, but they are no objection at all.

Thus, there are many things that I am told concerning the effects of electricity, magnetism, &c. and many things that are recorded in the philosophical transactions of the Royal Society, which I have never seen, and are very mysterious: But, being well attested, their mysteriousness is no manner of objection against my belief of the accounts; because, from what I have observed, and do know, such a mysteriousness is no other than is to be expected in a particular, exact observation of nature, and a critical tracing of its operations. It is to be expected, that the farther it is traced, the more mysteries will appear. To apply this to the case in hand: If the difficulties which attend that which is recommended by good proof or testimony to our reception, as a divine revelation, are no greater, nor of any other nature, than such as, all things considered, might reasonably be expected to attend a revelation of such a sort, of things of such a nature, and given for such ends and purposes, and under such circumstances; these difficulties not only are not of weight sufficient to balance the testimony or proof that recommends it, but they are of no weight at all as objections against the revelation. They are not reasonably to be looked upon as of the nature of arguments against it; but, on the contrary, may, with good reason, be looked upon as confirmations, and of the nature of arguments in its favour.

This is very evident, and the reason of it very plain. For, certainly; whatever is reasonably expected to be found in a truth, when we are seeking it, cannot be an objection against that truth, when we have found it. If it be reasonably expected in truth beforehand, then reason unites it with truth, as one property

property of that sort of truth: and, if so, then reason unites it with the truth, after it is found. Whatever reason determines to be a property of any kind of truth, that is properly looked upon in some degree as a mark of the truth, or of truths of that sort, or as belonging to the marks and evidences of it: for things are known by their properties. Reason determines truth by things, which reason determines to be the properties of truth. And, if we do not find such things belonging to supposed truth, that were before reasonably expected in truth of that kind, this is an objection against it, rather than the finding of them. The disappointment of reason is rather an objection with reason, than something to induce its acceptance and acquiescence. If the expectation be reasonable, then the not answering of it must so far appear unreasonable, or against reason, and so an objection in the way of reason.

Thus, if any one that is in search for persons or things of a certain kind, reasonably expects beforehand, that if he be successful in finding the person or thing, of the kind and quality that he is in search of, he shall find it possessed of certain properties: when he hath actually found something, with all those properties and circumstances that he expected, he receives it, and rests in it so much the more entirely, as the very thing that he was in quest of. And, surely, it would be no argument with him, that his invention is right, that some things, that he reasonably expected, are wanting: but, on the contrary, this would rather be an objection with his reason.

In order to judge what sort of difficulties are to be expected in a revelation made to mankind by God, such as Christians suppose the Scriptures to be, we must remember, that it is a revelation of what God knows to be the very truth concerning his own nature; of the acts and operations of his mind with respect to his creatures; of the grand scheme of infinite wisdom in his works, especially with respect to

the intelligent and moral world; a revelation of the spiritual and invisible world; a revelation of that invisible world which men shall belong to after this life; a revelation of the greatest works of God, the manner of his creating the world, and of his governing of it, especially with regard to the higher and more important parts of it; a revelation delivered in ancient languages.

Difficulties and incomprehensible mysteries are reasonably to be expected in a declaration from God, of the precise truth as he knows it, in matters of a spiritual nature; as we see things that are invisible, and not the objects of any of the external senses, are very mysterious, involved much more in darkness, attended with more mystery and difficulty to the understanding, than others; as many things concerning even the nature of our own souls themselves, that are the nearest to us, and the most intimately present with us, and so most in our view, of any spiritual things whatsoever.

The farther things are from the nature of those things that language is chiefly formed to express, viz. things appertaining to the common business and vulgar affairs of life; things obvious to sense and mens direct view and most vulgar observation, without speculation, reflection and abstraction; the more difficult it is clearly to express them in words. Our expressions concerning them, when words and language are applied to them, will be attended with greater abstruseness, difficulty, and seeming inconsistency; language not being well fitted to express these things; words and phrases not being prepared for that end. Such a reference to sensible and vulgar things, from the original use and design of words and phrases, is unavoidably introduced, that naturally confounds and loses the mind, and involves it in darkness.

If God gives a revelation of things of religion, it must be mainly concerning those things that are spiritual, the affairs of the moral and intelligent universe;

verse; which is the grand system of spirits: It must be chiefly about himself and intelligent creatures.

It may well be supposed, that a revelation concerning another and an invisible world, a future state that we are to be in when separated from the body, should be attended with much mystery. It may well be supposed, that things of such a world, are of an exceeding different nature from the things of this world, the things of sense, and all the objects and affairs which earthly language was made to express; and that they are not agreeable to such notions, imaginations, and ways of thinking that grow up with us, and are connatural to us, as we are from our infancy formed to an agreeableness to the things which we are conversant with in this world. We could not conceive of the things of sense, if we had never had these external senses. And, if we had only some of these senses, and not others; as, for instance, if we had only a sense of feeling, without the senses of seeing and hearing, how mysterious would a declaration of things of these last senses be! Or, if we had feeling and hearing, but had been born without eyes or optic nerves, the things of light, even when declared to us, would many of them be involved in mystery, and would appear exceedingly strange to us.

Thus, those that were in this manner without the sense of seeing, but had the other senses, might be informed by all about them, that they can perceive things at a distance, and perceive as plainly, and, in some respects, much more plainly, than by touching them: yea, that they could perceive things at so great a distance, that it would take up many millions of ages to travel to them. They might be informed of many things concerning colours, that would all be perfectly incomprehensible, and yet might be believed; and it could not be said that nothing at all is proposed to their belief, because they have no idea of colour.

They might be told that they perceive an extension, a length and breadth of colour, and terminations and limits,

limits; and so a figure of this kind of extension; and yet, that it is nothing that can be felt: which would be perfectly mysterious to them, and would seem an inconsistency, as they have no ideas of any such things as length, breadth, and limits, and figure of extension, but only certain ideas they have by touch. They might be informed by them, that they could perceive at once the extent and shape of a thing so great and multiform as a tree, which is an object that it would take them up many days to perceive the extent and shape of, by touch: This would seem very strange and impossible.

They might be told, that, to those who see, some things appear a thousand times as great as some others, that yet are made up of more visible points, or least visible parts, than those others: which would be very mysterious, and seem quite inconsistent with reason.

These, and many other things, would be attended with unsearchable mystery to them, concerning objects of sight; and, concerning which, they could never fully see how they can be reconciled to reason; at least, not without very long, particular, gradual, and elaborate instruction; and which, after all, they would not fully comprehend, so as clearly to see how the ideas connected in these propositions do agree.

And yet I suppose, in such a case, the most rational persons would give full credit to things that they know not by reason, but only by the revelation of the word of those that see. I suppose, a person born blind in the manner described, would nevertheless give full credit to the united testimony of the seeing world, in things which they said about light and colours, and would entirely rest on their testimony.

If God gives us revelation of the very truth, not only about spiritual beings, and concerning them in an unexperienced and unseen state; but also concerning a spiritual being or beings of a superior kind, and so of an unexperienced nature, entirely diverse from any thing we do now experience in our present state,

state, and from any thing that we can be conscious or immediately sensible of, in any state whatsoever that our nature can be in ; then, especially, may mysteries be expected in such a revelation.

The truth concerning any kind of perceiving being, of a different nature from our own, though of a kind inferior, might well be supposed to be attended with difficulty, by reason of its diversity from what we are conscious of in ourselves : but, much more so, when the nature and kind is superior. For a superior perceptive nature may well be supposed, in some respects, to include and comprehend what belongs to an inferior, as the greater comprehends the less, and the whole includes a part ; and therefore, what the superior experiences may give him advantage to conceive of concerning the nature of the inferior. But, on the contrary, an inferior nature does not include what belongs to a superior. When one of an inferior nature, considers what concerns a kind of beings, of a nature entirely above his own, there is something belonging to it that is over and above all that the inferior nature is conscious of.

A very great superiority, even in beings of the same nature with ourselves, sets them so much above our reach, that many of their affairs become incomprehensible, and attended with inexplicable intricacies. Thus, many of the affairs of adult persons are incomprehensible, and appear inexplicably strange to the understandings of little children : and many of the affairs of learned men, and great philosophers and mathematicians, things which they are conversant in, and well acquainted with, are far above the reach of the vulgar, and appear to them not only unintelligible, but absurd and impossible, and full of inconsistencies. But much more may this be expected, when the superiority is not only in degree of improvement of the faculties and properties of the same kind of beings, but also in the nature itself, as to its kind.

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So that, if there be a kind of created perceptive beings, in their nature vastly superior to the human nature; which none will deny to be possible, and a revelation should be given us concerning the nature, acts, and operations of this kind of creatures; it would be no wonder, if such a revelation should contain some things very much out of our reach, attended with great difficulty to our reason, being things of such a kind, that no improvement of our minds, that we are capable of, will bring us to an experience of any thing like them.

But, above all, if a revelation be made us concerning that Being that is uncreated and self-existent, who is infinitely diverse from and above all others in his nature, and so infinitely above all that any improvement or advancement of our nature can give us any consciousness of: In such a revelation, it would be very strange indeed, if there should not be some great mysteries, quite beyond our comprehension, and attended with difficulties which it is impossible for us fully to solve and explain.

It may well be expected, that a revelation of truth, concerning an infinite Being, should be attended with mystery. We find, that the reasonings and conclusions of the best metaphysicians and mathematicians, concerning infinities, are attended with paradoxes and seeming inconsistencies. Thus it is concerning infinite lines, surfaces, and solids, which are things external.

But much more may this be expected in infinite spiritual things; such as, infinite thought and ideas, infinite apprehension, infinite reason, infinite will, love and joy, infinite spiritual power, agency, &c.

Nothing is more certain, than that there must be an unmade and unlimited Being; and yet, the very notion of such a Being is all mystery, involving nothing but incomprehensible paradoxes, and seeming inconsistencies. It involves the notion of a Being, self-existent and without any cause, which is utterly inconceivable,

conceivable, and seems repugnant to all our ways of conception.

An infinite spiritual Being, or infinite understanding and will and spiritual power, must be omnipresent, without extension; which is nothing but mystery and seeming inconsistency.

The notion of an infinite Eternal, implies absolute immutability. That which is in all respects infinite, and is so absolutely perfect, and to the utmost degree and at all times, cannot be in any respect variable. And this immutability being constant from eternity, implies duration without succession, and is wholly mystery and seeming inconsistency. It seems as much as to say, an infinitely great or long duration all at once, or all in a moment; which seems to be saying, an infinitely great in an infinitely little; or an infinitely long line in a point without any length.

Infinite Understanding, which implies an understanding of all things, of all existence past, present, and future, and of all truth and all reason and argument, implies infinite thought and reason. But, how this can be absolutely without mutation, or succession of acts, seems mysterious and absurd. We can conceive of no such thing as thinking, without successive acting of the mind about ideas.

Perfect knowledge of all things, even of all the things of external sense, without any sensation, or any reception of ideas from without, is inconceivable mystery.

Infinite Knowledge, implies a perfect comprehensive view of a whole future eternity; which seems utterly impossible.

For, how can there be any reaching of the whole of this, to comprehend it, without reaching to the utmost limits of it? But this cannot be, where there is no such thing as utmost limits. And again, if God perfectly views an eternal succession or chain of events, then he perfectly sees every individual part of that chain, and there is no one link of it hid from
his

his sight. And yet there is no one link that he sees, but that there is a link, yea, innumerable links, beyond it; from which it would seem to follow, that there is a link beyond all the links that he sees, and consequently, that there is one link, yea, innumerable links, that he sees not; inasmuch as there are innumerable links beyond every one that he sees. And many other such seeming contradictions might be mentioned, which attend the supposition of God's omniscience.

If there be an absolute immutability in God, then there never arises any new act in God, or new exertion of himself; and yet there arise new effects: which seems an utter inconsistency.

And so, innumerable other such like mysteries and paradoxes are involved in the notion of an infinite and eternal intelligent Being.

Infomuch, that, if there had never been any *revelation*, by which God had made known himself by his word to mankind; the most speculative persons would, without doubt, have for ever been exceedingly at a loss concerning the nature of the Supreme Being, and First Cause of the universe. And, that the ancient philosophers and wiser heathens had so good notions of God as they had, seems to be much more owing to tradition, which originated from divine revelation, than from their own invention; though human reason served to keep those traditions alive in the world, and led the more considerate to embrace and retain the imperfect traditions which were to be found in any parts remaining, as they appeared, when once suggested and delivered, agreeable to reason.

If a revelation be made of the principal scheme of the wisdom of the Supreme and infinitely Wise Ruler, respecting his moral kingdom, wherein his all-sufficient wisdom is displayed, in the case of its greatest trial; ordering and regulating the said moral kingdom to its great ends, when in the most difficult circumstances; extricating it out of the most extreme calamities,

calamities, in which it had been involved by the malice and subtilty of the chief and most crafty of all God's enemies: It being the principal of all the effects of the wisdom of Him, the depth of whose wisdom is unsearchable and absolutely infinite; his deepest scheme, by which mainly the grand design of the universal, incomprehensibly complicated system of all his operations, and the infinite series of his administrations, is most happily completely and gloriously attained; the scheme in which God's wisdom is mainly exercised and displayed: it may reasonably be expected, that such a revelation will contain many mysteries.

We see that to be the case, even as to many works of human wisdom and art. They appear strange, paradoxical, and incomprehensible, by those that are vastly inferior in sagacity, or are entirely destitute of that skill or art. How are many of the effects of human art attended with many things that appear strange and altogether incomprehensible by children, and many others seeming to be beyond and against nature; and, in many cases, the effect produced not only seems to be beyond the power of any visible means, but inconsistent with it, being an effect contrary to what would be expected: the means seem inconsistent with the end.

If God reveals the exact truth in those things, which, in the language of the heathen sages, are matters of philosophy, *i. e.* not the things of sense and of common life, but matters of reflection and speculation; as, especially, things of morality and theology; things concerning the nature of the Deity, and the nature of man, so far as related to the Deity, &c. I say, if God reveals the real precise truth concerning these things, it may most reasonably be expected, that such a revelation should contain many mysteries and paradoxes, considering how many mysteries the doctrines of the greatest and best philosophers, in all ages, concerning these things, have contained; or, at least, how very mysterious, and seemingly repugnant

nant they are to the reason of the vulgar, and persons of less understanding; and considering how mysterious the principles of philosophers, even concerning matters far inferior to these, would have appeared in any former age, if they had been then revealed to be true, which however are now received as the most undoubted truths.

If God gives mankind his word in a large book, consisting of a vast variety of parts, many books, histories, prophecies, prayers, songs, parables, proverbs, doctrines, promises, sermons, epistles, and discourses of very many kinds, all connected together, all united in one grand drift and design; and one part having a various and manifold respect to others; so as to become one great work of God, and one grand system; as is the system of the universe, with its vast variety of parts, connected in one grand work of God: It may well be expected that there should be mysteries, things incomprehensible and exceeding difficult to our understanding; analogous to the mysteries that are found in all the other works of God, as the works of creation and providence; and particularly such as are analogous to the mysteries that are observable in the system of the natural world, and the frame of man's own nature.

For such a system or bible of the word of God, is as much the work of God, as any other of his works; the effect of the power, wisdom, and contrivance of a God, whose wisdom is unsearchable, whose nature and ways are past finding out. And as the system of nature, and the system of revelation, are both divine works; so, both are, in different senses, a divine word. Both are the voice of God to intelligent creatures; a manifestation and declaration of himself to mankind. Man's reason was given him, that he might know God, and might be capable of discerning the manifestations he makes of himself in the effects and external expressions and emanations of the divine perfections.

If it be still objected, that it is peculiarly unreasonable that mysteries should be supposed in a revelation

lation given to mankind; because, if there be such a revelation, the direct and principal design of it must be, to teach and instruct mankind, and so to enlighten and inform their understandings, which is inconsistent with its delivering things to man, which he cannot understand; and which do not inform and enlighten, but only puzzle and confound his understanding: I answer,

1st, Men are capable of understanding as much as is revealed, and so much as is pretended to be revealed; though they cannot understand every thing that belongs to the things that are revealed; or though there be secret things pertaining to the things revealed, which God has not revealed. As, for instance, God may reveal, that there are Three that have the same nature of the Deity, whom it is most proper for us to look upon as Three Persons: Though the particular manner of their distinction, or how they differ, may not be revealed; we may nevertheless understand so much as is revealed concerning it.

So, he may reveal that the Godhead was united to man, so as to be properly looked upon as the same person; but not reveal how it was effected.

2^d, No allowance is made in the objection, for what may be understood of the word of God in future ages, which is not now understood: And it is to be considered, that divine revelation is not given only for the present or past ages.

3^d, The seeming force of this objection, lies wholly in this, that we must suppose whatever God does, tends to answer the end for which he does it; but that those parts of a revelation that we cannot understand, do not answer the end, inasmuch as informing our understandings is the very end of a revelation, if there be any such thing.

But this objection is no other, than just equivalent to an objection which may be made against many parts of the *creation*, particularly of this lower world. It is apparent, the most direct and principal

end of this lower world was, to be for the habitation, use, and benefit of mankind, the head of this lower world. But there are some parts of it that seem to be of no use to man, but are rather inconvenient and prejudicial to him; as, the innumerable stones and rocks that overspread so great a part of the earth, which, as to any thing known, are altogether useless, and oftentimes are rather an inconvenience than benefit.

Thus, it is reasonable to expect, that, in such a revelation, there should be many things plain and easy to be understood; and that the revelation should be most intelligible, wherein it is most necessary for us to understand it, in order to our guidance and direction in the way to our happiness; but that there should also be many incomprehensible mysteries in it, yea, many things very difficult to our reason, in that degree which we have attained of the use of it; many things understood in part, but yet that room should be left for vast improvement in the knowledge of them: That the revelation should be of such a nature, containing such depths and hidden treasures of knowledge, that there should be room for improvement in understanding, and to find out more and more, to all the wisest and best of men, to the end of the world; and that the case, in this respect, should actually be the same as concerning the works of nature; that there should actually be a gradual improvement in the understanding of it; that many things that were formerly great and insuperable difficulties, unintelligible mysteries, should now, by further study and improvement, be well cleared up, and cease longer to remain difficulties; and that other difficulties should be considerably diminished, though not yet fully cleared up.

It may be expected, that as, in the system of nature, so, in this system of revelation, there should be many parts whose use is but little understood, and many that should seem wholly useless, yea, and some that should seem rather to do hurt than good.

So

So I might further observe, that if we have a revelation given in ancient languages, used among a people whose customs and phraseology are but very imperfectly understood, many difficulties should arise from hence. And that, in a very short concise history, in which only some particular facts and circumstances, that concern the special purpose and design of that revelation, are mentioned, and innumerable others are omitted that would be proper to be mentioned, if the main design were to give a full account, and clear, connected, continued history of such a people, or such affairs as the history mentions; I say, in such a case, it is no wonder that many doubts and difficulties arise.

88. Tindal's main argument against the need of any revelation, is, that the *law of nature is absolutely perfect*. But how weak and impertinent is this arguing, that because the *law of nature* (which is no other than natural rectitude and obligation) is perfect, therefore the *light of nature* is sufficient. To say, that the law of nature is perfect, yea, absolutely perfect, is no more than to say, that what is naturally fit and right in itself, is indeed right; and that what is in itself, or in its own nature, perfectly and absolutely right, is absolutely right. But this is empty, insipid kind of doctrine. It is an idle way of spending time, and ink and paper, to spend them in proving, that what is in its own nature perfectly true, is perfectly true; and what is in its nature perfectly good, is perfectly good; or that what is, is, and is as it is. But this is all that can be meant by the law of nature's being perfect.

And how far is this from having any reference to that question, whether we have by mere nature, without instruction, all that light and advantage that we need, clearly and fully to know what is right, and all that is needful for us to be and to do, in our circumstances as sinners, &c. in order to the forgiveness

ness of sin, the favour of God, and our own happiness?

What, according to the nature of things, is fittest and best, may be most perfect; and yet our natural discerning, and knowledge of this, may be most imperfect.

If Tindal, or any other Deist, would assert, and urge it upon mankind as an assertion that they ought to believe, that the light of nature is so sufficient to teach all mankind what they ought, or, in any respect, need to be, and to believe and practise for their good, that any additional instruction is needless and useless: then, all instruction in families and schools is needless and useless; all instruction of parents, tutors, and philosophers; all that has been said to promote any such knowledge as tends to make men good and happy by word of mouth, or by writing and books; all that is written by ancient and modern philosophers and learned men. And then, also, all the pains the Deists take in talking and writing to enlighten mankind, is wholly needless and vain; and all Tindal's own instruction, and particularly, all the pains he takes to make man believe that it is not best to give heed to pretended revelations and traditionary religion, as what tends to make mankind miserable in society, as if the light of nature was not perfectly and absolutely sufficient to teach them what is needful to avoid misery, without its being revealed to them by him.

If the perfection of the light of nature do not prove any thing against the great need and usefulness of the farther instruction of fellow-creatures; so, neither does it prove any thing against as great usefulness and necessity of the farther instruction of their Creator.

If it is no evidence that mankind do not need to have something farther revealed to them by Mr Tindal, than the light of nature brings them to the knowledge of, in order to the welfare of mankind, and human society's being delivered from foolish and destructive notions that have generally prevailed; so, no
more

more is it any evidence, that they do not need to have something farther revealed to them by God, who is wiser, and more fit to be a teacher of mankind, than Mr Tindal.

When it is asserted that the light of nature, or the means and advantages which all mankind have by pure nature, to know the way of their duty and happiness, are absolutely sufficient, without any additional means and advantages; one of these two things must be meant by it, if it has any meaning: either that they are sufficient in order to a mere possibility of obtaining all needful and useful knowledge in these important concerns; or that these natural means have a sufficient tendency actually to reach the effect, either universally, or generally, or at least in a prevailing degree, according as the state of mankind may be.

If the former of these be meant, viz. that the means of knowledge and understanding of these things, which all mankind have by mere nature, is sufficient, in order to a bare possibility of obtaining this knowledge; even that, should it be allowed, will not at all prove, that farther light is not extremely needed by mankind. A bare possibility, as here distinguished from all tendency to the actual obtaining the effect or end, may be; and yet there may be no tendency or probability that ever the effect (however necessary, and however dreadful the consequence will be of its failing) will be reached, in one single instance, in the whole world of mankind, from the beginning of the world to the end of it, though it should stand millions of ages.

But if, by the sufficiency of these natural means, be meant, a sufficiency of tendency actually to reach the effect, either universally, or in a prevailing degree, considering all things belonging to the state and circumstances of mankind: I say, if by this be meant, asserting the light of nature to be sufficient to obtain the effect, it is the very same thing as to say, that it actually does obtain the effect. For, if the tendency, all things considered, be sufficient actually

tually to obtain the effect, doubtless it does actually obtain the effect. For, what should hinder a cause from actually obtaining the effect that it has a sufficient tendency to obtain, all things considered? So that here, what we have to inquire, is, whether that effect be actually obtained in the world? whether the world of mankind be actually brought to all necessary or very important knowledge of these things, merely by the means they have by nature? History, observation, and experience, are the things which must determine the question.

In order the more clearly to judge of this matter, of the sufficiency of the light of nature to know what is necessary to be known of religion in order to man's happiness, we must consider what are the things that must be known in order to this; which are these two: 1st, The religion of nature, or the religion proper and needful, considering the state and relations we stand in as creatures: 2^d, The religion of a sinner, or the religion and duties proper and necessary for us, considering our state as depraved and guilty creatures, having incurred the displeasure of our Creator.

As to the former, it is manifest from fact, that nature alone is not sufficient for the discovery of the religion of nature, in the latter sense of sufficiency: That is, no means we have by mere nature, without instruction, have any tendency to bring men to the knowledge of the nature of God, and our natural relation to, and dependence on him, and the consequent relations we stand in to our fellow-creatures, and the duties becoming these relations, sufficient actually to reach the effect, either universally, or generally, or in any prevailing degree. No; nor does it appear to have proved sufficient, so much as in a single instance. A sufficiency to see the reasonableness of these things, when pointed out, is not the same thing as a sufficiency to find them out. None but either mere dunces, or those who are incorri-

incorrigibly wilful, will deny that there is a vast difference.

And as to the latter, viz. the religion of a sinner, or the duties proper and necessary for us, as depraved, guilty, and offending creatures; it is most evident, the light of nature cannot be sufficient for our information, by any means, or in any sense whatsoever. No, nor is the law of nature sufficient either to prescribe or establish this religion. The light of nature is, in no sense whatsoever, sufficient to discover this religion. It has no sufficient tendency to it; nor, indeed, any tendency at all to discover it to any one single person in any age. And it not only has no tendency to the obtaining of this knowledge, by mere natural means, but it affords no possibility of it.

Not only is the light of nature insufficient to discover this religion, but the law of nature, as distinguished from the light of it, is not sufficient to establish it, or to give any occasion or room for it.

89. *Definition* : By Conversation, I mean intelligent beings expressing their minds one to another, in words, or other signs equivalent, being signs intentionally directed to us for our notice, whose immediate and main design is to be significations or expressions of the mind of him or them who causes, or gives them to the knowledge or notice of him or them to whom they are directed; wherein those signs are evidences distinguished from works done by them, from which we may argue their minds, though the first and most immediate design of the work be something else than a mere signification to us of the mind of the efficient. Thus, I distinguish God's communicating his mind to us by word or conversation, from his giving us opportunity to learn it by philosophical reasoning. By the latter I mean, arguing the nature and will of God, by God's works which we observe in the natural world.

There

There is a great difference between God's moral government of his creatures, that have understanding and will, and his general government of providential disposal.

The nature, design, and ends of the latter, by no means require that it should be declared and made visible by a revelation of the methods, rules, particular views, designs, and ends of it: these are secret things that belong to God. So far as the distinction takes place or holds between this government and God's moral government, mens understandings and wills are noway concerned. There is no application to these faculties in it; nor are these faculties any otherwise concerned, than the qualities or properties of inanimate and senseless things.

But it is quite otherwise with respect to God's moral government of a kingdom or society of intelligent and willing creatures; to which society he is united as its head, ruling for its good. The nature of that requires, that it should be declared, open and visible, as is most apparent. How can any moral government be properly and sufficiently established and maintained in a kingdom or commonwealth of intelligent agents, consisting in exhibiting, prescribing, and enforcing methods, rules, and ends of their own intelligent voluntary actions, without declaring, and particularly promulgating to their understandings, those methods, rules, and enforcements? Moral government of a society, in the very nature of it, implies, and consists in, an application to their understandings, in directing the intelligent will, and in enforcing the direction by the declaration made.

It is needful, in order to a proper moral government, that the head, or heads, or ruler of the society, should enforce the rules of the society, by threatening just punishments, and promising the most suitable and wise rewards. But, without word or voluntary declaration, there is no threatening or promising in the case, in a proper sense. To leave the
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the subject to find out what reward would be wise, if there appear in the state of things room for every subject to guess at it in some degree, would be a different thing from promising it. And to leave men to their own reason, to find out what would be a just, deserved, and, all things considered, a wise punishment, though we should suppose some sufficiency in every one's reason for this, would be a different thing from threatening of it.

It is needful, in order to a proper maintaining of moral government in a moral kingdom, not in a ruined, deserted state, the union between the head and members remaining, that there should be conversation between the governors and governed, as it is requisite that the former should have intercourse with the latter in a way agreeable to their nature; that is, by way of voluntary signification of their mind to the governed, as the governed signify their minds voluntarily one to another; that there should be something equivalent to conversation between the rulers and ruled; and that thus the rulers should make themselves visible; that the designs and ends of government should be made known; that it should be visible what is aimed at, and what grand ends or events are in view in the rulers disposals of the society; that the mind of the rulers should be declared as to the rules, measures, and methods, to be observed by the society. If the rulers are sovereign, absolute disposers, it is necessary their will should be particularly declared, as to the good and evil consequence of obedience or disobedience, which they intend as moral enforcements of the rules and laws, to persuade, and, as it were, constrain, the will to a compliance. For they can reach the will, or affect it at all, no farther than made known.

It is requisite something should be known, particularly, of the nature and weight and degree of the rewards and punishments, and of their time and place and duration.

It

It is requisite it should be declared what is the end for which God has made us, and made the world; supports it, and provides for it; orders its events. For what end mankind are made in particular; what is intended to be their main employment; what they should chiefly aim at in what they do in the world: How far God, the Creator, is man's end; how far he is to have respect to him in what he does, in the great business he is made for; and what man is to aim at with respect to God, who stands in no need of us, and cannot be in the least dependent on us: How far, and in what respect, we are to make God our highest end; and how we are to make ourselves, or our fellow-creatures, our end: What benefits man will have by complying with his end; what evils he shall be subject to by refusing, or failing so to comply, in a greater or lesser degree. If we have offended, and deserved punishment, it must be known on what terms we may be forgiven and restored to favour; how far we may be restored to favour; and what benefits of favour we shall receive, if we are reconciled.

It is apparent, that there would be no hope that these things would ever be satisfyingly determined among mankind, in the present darkness and disadvantages which their understandings labour under, without a revelation. Without a revelation, now extant, or once extant, having some remaining influence by tradition, men would undoubtedly for ever be at a loss, what God expects from us, and what we may expect from him; what we are to depend upon as to our concern with God, and what ground we are to go upon in our conduct and proceedings that relate to him; what end we are to aim at; what rule we are to be directed by; and what good, and what harm, is to be expected from a right or wrong conduct. Yea, without a revelation, men would be greatly at a loss concerning God; what he is; what manner of Being; whether properly intelligent and willing; a Being that has will and design, maintaining

maintaining a proper, intelligent, voluntary dominion over the world. Notions of the first Being, like those of Hobbes and Spinoza, would prevail. Especially would they be at a loss concerning those perfections of God, which he exercises as a moral governor. For we find that some of the Deists, though they, from revelation, have been taught these; yet, having cast off revelation, apparently doubt of them all. Lord Bolingbroke, in particular, insists that we have no evidence of them.

And if, with regard to many, when they have a revelation fully setting forth the perfections of God, giving a consistent, rational account of them, and pointing forth their consistence, and leading us to the reason of them, their reason may rest satisfied in them; this is no evidence that it is not exceeding needful that God should tell us of them. It is very needful that God should declare to mankind what manner of Being he is. For, though reason may be sufficient to confirm such a declaration after it is given, and enable us to see its consistence, harmony, and rationality, in many respects; yet reason may be utterly insufficient first to discover these things.

Yea, notwithstanding the clear and infinitely abundant evidences of the being of a God, we need that God should tell us that he is; that there is a great Being, who understands, who wills, and who has made and governs the world. It is of most unspeakable advantage as to the knowledge of this, that God has told us of it; and there is much reason to think, that the notion that mankind in general have entertained in all ages concerning a Deity, has been very much originally owing to revelation.

On the supposition, that God has a moral kingdom in the world, that he is the head of a moral society, consisting either of some part of mankind, or of the whole; in what darkness and great obscurity must the affairs of this moral kingdom be carried on, without any manner of communication between the head and the body; the ruler never making himself known

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to the society he is the head of, and has the moral direction, government, and whole care of, by any sort of converse, either immediate or mediate; never exhibiting himself by any word, or other equivalent expression whatsoever, either by himself, or by any mediators, or messengers?

So far as we see, or have any notice, all moral agents are conversible agents. It seems to be so agreeable to the nature of moral agents, and their state in the universal system, that we observe none without it; and there are no beings that have so much as a shadow of intelligence and will, but, so far as they have any image of this, possess the faculty of conversation, or a semblance of it; as in all kinds of birds, beasts, and even insects. So far as there is any appearance of having a mind, or something like a mind, so far they have their significations of their minds one to another, in something like conversation among rational creatures. And, as we rise higher in the scale of beings, we do not see that an increase of perfection diminishes the need or propriety of communication and intercourse of this kind, but augments it. And accordingly, we see most of it among the most perfect beings. So we see conversation by voluntary immediate significations of each other's minds, as it were infinitely more fully, properly, and variously, between mankind, than any other animals here below. And if there are creatures superior to mankind united in society, doubtless still voluntary converse is more full and perfect.

Especially do we find conversation proper and requisite between intelligent creatures concerning moral affairs, which are their most important affairs; and affairs wherein especially moral agents are concerned, as joined in society, and having union and communion one with another. As to other concerns that are merely personal and natural, wherein we are concerned more separately, and by ourselves, and not as members of society, in them there is not equal need of conversation.

Moral

Moral agents are social agents ; affairs of morality are affairs of society. It is concerning moral agents as united in society in a commonwealth or kingdom, that we have been speaking.

Particular moral agents so united, need conversation. The affairs of their social union cannot well be maintained without conversation.

And, if so, what reason can be given, why there should be no need of conversation with the head of the society ? The head of the society, so far as it is united with it as a moral society, is a social head. The head belongs to the society, as the natural head belongs to the body. And the union of the members with the head is greater, stricter, and more important, than one with another. And if their union with other members of the society require conversation, much more their greater union with the head.

By all that we see and experience, the moral and intelligent world, and the conversible world, are the same thing ; and it never was intended, that the affairs of society, in any that are united in society among intelligent creatures, should be upheld and carried on without conversation.

There is no more reason to deny God any conversation with his moral kingdom, in giving laws, and enforcing them with promises and threatenings, than to deny him any conversation with them in another world, when judging them. But, can any that believe a future state, rationally imagine, that when men go into another world to be judged by their Supreme Governor, nothing will pass or be effected through the immediate interposition of the Judge, but all things be left wholly to go on according to laws of nature established from the beginning of the world : and that souls pass into another state by a law of nature, as a stone, when shaken off from a building, falls down by gravity, without any miraculous signification from God, or disposal of his hand at all ? But there is as much reason to suppose this, as to deny any miraculous interposition in giving and establishing the

laws of the moral society. If judgment and execution by law, be by immediate interposition and declaration, why not legislation?

The ground of moral behaviour, and all moral government and regulation, is society, or mutual intercourse and social regards. The special medium of union and communication of the members of the society, and the being of society as such, is conversation; and the well-being and happiness of society is friendship. It is the highest happiness of all moral agents; but friendship, above all other things that belong to society, requires conversation. It is what friendship most naturally and directly desires. By conversation, not only is friendship maintained and nourished, but the felicity of friendship is tasted and enjoyed. The happiness of God's moral kingdom consists, in an inferior degree, in the members enjoyment of each other's friendship; but infinitely more in the enjoyment of their head. Therefore, here especially, and above all, is conversation requisite.

Conversation between God and mankind in this world, is maintained by God's word on his part, and by prayer on ours. By the former, he speaks and expresses his mind to us; by the latter, we speak and express our minds to him.

Sincere and a suitably high friendship towards God, in all that believe God to be properly an intelligent, willing Being, does most apparently, directly, and strongly, incline to prayer; and it no less disposes the heart strongly to desire to have our infinitely glorious and gracious Friend expressing his mind to us by his word, that we may hear it.

The same light has directed the nations of the world in general, to prayer, to some deity or deities; and to suppose, that God, or the gods, have revealed themselves to men. And we see, that the same infidelity that disposes men to deny any divine revelation, disposes them to reject as absurd the duty of prayer.

If

If God's moral kingdom, or the society of his friends and willing subjects, shall be in a most happy state in another world, in the most perfect social state, united in the most complete friendship, and in a most perfect and happy union with God their Head, (as some of the Deists pretend to believe); is it reasonable to suppose any other, than that they will fully enjoy the sweets of their friendship one with another, in the most perfect conversation, either by words, or some more perfect medium of expressing their minds? And shall they have, at the same time, no conversation at all with their glorious Head, the fountain of all the perfection and felicity of the society, in friendship with whom their happiness chiefly consists? That friendship, and the happiness they have in it, is begun in this world; and this is the state wherein they are trained up for that more perfect state: And shall they nevertheless live here wholly without any intercourse with God of this sort; though their union with God, as their moral Head, and their great Friend, begins here; and though their happiness, as consisting in friendship to him, and also the enjoyment of that subordinate happiness of holding a virtuous and holy conversation one with another, be begun here? The need of conversation, in order properly to support and carry on the concerns of society, may well appear, by considering the need of it, for answering all the purposes of friendship, which is one of the main concerns of society, in some respects the main social concern, and the end of all the rest.

Let us suppose, that some friend, above all others dear to us, in whose friendship consisted the main comfort of our life, and all the happiness which we depend on here, should leave us in possession of some work of his, or something that he had contrived and accomplished, some manifold complicated effect that he had produced, which we might have always in our view; which work should be a very great, sure and manifold evidence of the excellencies

of the mind of our friend, of his great and fixed and firm benevolence to us; and then should withdraw for ever, and never have any conversation with us; no word ever should pass, or any thing of that nature; and no word should be left behind in writing, nor any word ever spoken left in the memory: would this sufficiently and completely answer the purposes of this great friendship, and satisfy its ends and desires, or be a proper support of this great end of society?

I cannot but think, every sober, considerate person will at once determine, that it would be very far from it, for such reasons as these, that it would not give us those views of things, pertaining to the support and enjoyment of friendship, suitable to the nature of intelligent, volitive and conversible beings; not giving the direct and immediate view, nor at all tending in so great a degree and so agreeable a manner to affect and impress the mind.

And as, for these reasons, this alone would not answer the ends and purposes of society in this respect; so, for the same reasons, it would not answer other purposes of society.

As we may suppose, that God will govern mankind, in that moral kingdom which he hath mercifully set up among them, in a manner agreeable to their nature; so, it is reasonable to suppose, that he would make his moral government, with respect to them, visible, not only in declaring the general ends, methods and rules of his government, but also by making known many of the chief of his more particular aims and designs. As, in human kingdoms, in order to the wisdom, righteousness and goodness of the administration's being properly visible, so far as is requisite for the encouraging and animating of the subject, and in order to the suitable convenience, satisfaction and benefit of the whole society of intelligent agents, it is needful, not only that the general end, viz. the public good, should be known, but also, the particular design of many of the principal

pal parts of the administration, the main negotiations, treaties and changes of affairs, the cause and end of wars that are engaged in, the ground of treaties of peace and commerce, the design of general revolutions in the state of the kingdom, &c. Otherwise, the society is not governed in a manner becoming their rational and active nature; but affairs are carried on all in the dark, and the members have no opportunity to consent or concur, to approve or disapprove, to rejoice in the goodness, wisdom and benefit of the administration, and to pay proper regards to those in whose hands the government is, &c. These things are necessary for the establishment and confirmation of the government. God's moral government, over his moral kingdom on earth, cannot, in such like respects, be carried on in a visible manner, and in a way suitable to our nature, without divine history and prophecy. Without divine history, we cannot properly see the grounds and foundation of divine administrations in God's moral kingdom, the first formation or erection of God's moral kingdom, the nature and manner of the main revolutions that it has been the subject of, which are the ground of future designs, and to which future events and intended revolutions have a relation and connection. It is also necessary, that those past events should be known, in order that the reason, wisdom and benefit of the present state of the kingdom, and of God's present dispensations towards it, may be known. And prophecy is needful to reveal the future designs and aims of government, and what good things are to be expected.

These things are necessary, in order to the proper establishment, health and prosperity, of God's moral, intelligent kingdom. Without them, divine government, or the government of an infinitely wise and good Head, is not sensible. There is no opportunity to see the effects and success of the wisdom of the administration. There is no opportunity to find it by experience. Neither the designs of government,

nor the accomplishment of those designs, are sensible; and the government itself, with respect to fact, is not made visible. We might guess this and the other facts and events to be ordered on such a design, and for such an end; but could not know the whole scheme, since the wise connection of disposals would be hid by a veil, and ly concealed in darkness; which is not a way of administering, suitable to a society of intelligent creatures, made intelligent and volitive and active, that so they might be capable of seeing God's perfections as manifested in his doings; of concurring with God's ends and designs, and rejoicing in and praising his wisdom, holiness and goodness; of serving God; of being his active instruments in accomplishing his designs, and of being made happy in the view of the glory and favour of God manifested in his administrations, and thus enjoying the glorious Ruler and Head of the society.

If it be said, that reason, and the light of nature, without revelation, are sufficient to shew us, that the end of God's government, in his moral kingdom, must be, to promote these two things among mankind, viz. their virtue, and their happiness:

In reply, I would ask, What satisfaction can men without revelation have, with respect to the design, wisdom and success of God's government, as to these ends, when wickedness so generally prevails and reigns, through all ages hitherto, in the far greater part of the world; and the world, at all times, is so full of calamities, miseries and death, having no prophecies of a better state of things in which all is to issue at last, in the latter ages of the world; or assuring us that all these miserable changes and great confusion are guided by Infinite Wisdom to that great final issue, and without any revelation of a future state of happiness of the city of God in another world?

Object. God does maintain a moral government over all mankind: but we see, in fact, that many are not governed in way of conversation, or by revelation, in as far as the greater part of the world have

have been destitute of divine revelation; which shews that God does not look upon conversation as necessary in order to his moral government of mankind, as God judges for himself, and acts according to his own judgment.

Ans. 1. What I have been speaking of, is God's moral government over a society of moral agents, which are his kingdom, or a society that have God for their King, united to them as the Head of the society; as it is with earthly kings with respect to their own kingdoms, where the union between king and subjects is not broken and dissolved; and not of a society or country of rebels, who have forsaken their lawful sovereign, withdrawn themselves from subjection to him, and cast off his government: though they may still be under the king's power, and moral dominion, in some sense, as he may have it in his power and design, to conquer, subdue, judge and punish them for their rebellion. But yet the sense in which such a nation is under the moral government of this king, and may be said to be his kingdom or people, is surely extremely diverse from that of a kingdom remaining in union with their king. In the case of a people broken off from their king, the maintaining of intercourse by conversation is in nowise in like manner requisite. The reasons for such intercourse, which take place in the other case, do not take place in this.

In that case, society ceases; *i. e.* that union ceases between God and man, by which they should be of one society. And where society ceases, there the argument for conversation ceases. If a particular member of the society were wholly cut off, and ceases to be of the society, the union being entirely broken; the argument for conversation, the great medium of social concerns, ceases. So, if the body be cut off from the head, and be entirely disunited from it, intercourse ceases. Moral government in a society is a social affair: It is the main and most important thing; wherein consists the intercourse between superior and inferior

interior constituents of a society of moral agents; between that which is original, and that which is dependent, directing and directed in the society. It is proper, in this case, that the rebel people should have sufficient means of knowing the end of their rebellion, and that it is their duty to be subject to their king, to seek reconciliation with him, and to inquire after his will. But while they remain obstinate in their rebellion, and the king has not received them into favour, the state of things does not require, that he should particularly declare his intentions with respect to them, or should open to them the designs and methods of his administration; and particularly should publish among them the way and terms of reconciliation; make revelations of his goodness and wisdom, and the great benefits of his government; converse with them as their friend, and so open the way for their being happy in so great a friend; or that he should so particularly and immediately publish among them, particular statutes and rules for their good, as a society of moral agents, &c. Conversation, in this sense, when there is an utter breach of the union, is not to be expected, nor is it requisite, though judging and condemning may.

Ans. 2. So far as the union between God and the Heathen world has not been utterly broken; so far they have not been left utterly destitute of all benefit of divine revelation. They are not so entirely and absolutely cast off, but that there is a possibility of their being reconciled; and God has so ordered the case, that there is an equal possibility of their receiving the benefit of divine revelation.

If the Heathen world, or any parts of it, have not only enjoyed a mere possibility of being restored to favour, but have had some advantages for it; so, a great part, yea, mostly the greater part of the Heathen world, have not been left merely to the light of nature. They have had many things, especially in times of the Old Testament, that were delivered to mankind in the primitive ages of the world by revelation,

tion, handed down from their ancestors by tradition ; and many things borrowed from the Jews. And, during those ages, by many wonderful dispensations towards the Jews, wherein God did, in a most public and striking manner, display himself, and shew his hand, the world had, from time to time, notices sufficient to convince them, that there was a divine revelation extant, and sufficient to induce them to seek after it. And things sufficient to make revelation public, to spread it abroad, to extend the fame of it and its effects to the utmost ends of the earth, and to draw mens attention to it, have been vastly more and greater in later times, than in the primitive ages.

Ans. 3. The nations that are separated from the True God, and live in an open and obstinate full rejection of him as their Supreme Moral Governor, reject all friendly intercourse, while their state is such. They are open enemies ; and, so far as God treats them as such, he does not exercise any friendly moral government over them. And they have light sufficient, without revelation, for any other exercise of moral government and intercourse, besides those that are friendly, viz. in judging and condemning them. They have light sufficient for that judgment and condemnation, which they shall be the subjects of. For their condemnation shall proceed no farther, than so as to be proportioned to their light. They shall be condemned for the violation of the law of nature and nations ; and the degree of their condemnation shall be only answerable to the degree of the means and advantages they have had for information of the duties of this law, and of their obligations to perform them.

Ans. 4. What has appeared in those parts of the world which have been destitute of revelation, is so far from being any evidence that revelation is not necessary, that it has ever happened, that in those nations and ages that have been most destitute of revelation, the necessity of revelation has most evidently and remarkably appeared, by the extreme blindness and delusion which have prevailed and reigned,

reigned, without any remedy, or any ability in those nations to extricate themselves from their darkness.

90. Mankind need means of certainty, clearness and satisfaction, in things that concern their welfare, in proportion to the importance of these things: Such as, whether there be a future state of happiness and misery; what that state is; what the will of God is; what are those things that will displease him, and make us the objects of his anger and hatred; whether there be any reconciliation after we have offended, and how it may be obtained. We see that God takes such care of mankind, and all other creatures, that usually they are not left without necessary means, by foresight, or something equivalent, for their own preservation and comfortable existence; and even in things of infinitely less importance.

But it is exceedingly apparent, that without a revelation, mankind must be for ever in the most woful doubt with respect to those things: And not only with respect to those things; but, if they are not led by revelation and divine teaching into a right way of using their reason, in arguing from effects to causes, &c. they would for ever remain in the most woful doubt and uncertainty concerning the nature and the very being of God. This appears, not only by the state of the Heathen world, wise and unwise, learned and unlearned, polite nations and barbarous, ages after ages, before the light of Christianity came abroad in the world; but also by what appears among those who, in these late ages, have renounced divine revelation, even the wisest and greatest of them, and such as are of the strongest and most acute abilities; as appears from the account which Dr Leland gives of the Deistical writers of the last and present age.

Hobbes denied any distinction between soul and body: He denied a future state: He held, that we are obliged to obey an infidel magistrate in matters of religion; that thought is free; but, when it comes to public confession of faith, the private reason must submit

submit to the public. He owns the Being of a God, but says we know no more of him but that he exists: Holds that God is corporeal: That, by the law of nature, all men have a right to all things, and over all persons; and that no way is so reasonable, as for any man to anticipate, *i. e.* by force and wiles to master all the persons of others that he can, so long as he sees no other power great enough to endanger him: That, antecedent to civil laws, all actions are indifferent; nothing being good or evil in itself.

Toland was of opinion, that there is no other god but the universe; therein agreeing with *Spinoza*.

The *Earl of Shaftesbury* casts reflections on the doctrine of future rewards and punishments, as if it were of disservice to the interests of virtue.

The author of *Christianity not founded on Argument*, represents even natural religion as not founded on argument, any more than revealed; and pretends, that all attempts to prove the principles of natural religion by reason, and even the Being of a God, have done more harm than good; and takes a great deal of pains to destroy all certainty of reason. He represents it as perpetually fluctuating, and never capable of coming to any certainty in any thing, and as though truth and falsehood were equally to be proved by it. He absolutely declares against instructing children in religious or moral principles, as a wicked attempt to prepossess their tender minds.

Chubb shews himself no friend to the doctrine of a particular providence. He plainly intimates, that he looks upon God as having nothing now to do with the good or evil that is done among mankind, and that mens state and circumstances in the world, are things which entirely depend on second causes, and in which providence doth not interpose at all. He discardeth all hope of divine assistances in the practice of that which is good. He insists, that prayer to God is no part of natural religion. He represents it as absolutely doubtful, whether the soul be material or immaterial; or whether it be distinct from the body;
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and, if it be, whether it be equally perishable with the body, and shall die with it, or shall subsist after the dissolution of the body. These are points, he says, which he cannot possibly determine, because he has nothing to ground such a determination upon: and at the same time declares, that if the soul be perishable with the body, there can surely be no place for argument with regard to a future state of existence to men, or a future retribution. It is easy to see, that he inclines most to think the soul is material. He absolutely discards the proof of a future state, from the present unequal distributions of Divine Providence. He signifies, that if there be a future retribution, it is most probable, that only those shall be called to an account, who have been greatly subservient to the public good or hurt of mankind. And as he supposes but few will be called to an account, so it is only for some particular actions; and that they will not be called to an account for foolishly using the names and terms, by which the Deity is characterised. The only offence against God, is, he thinks, the want of a just sense of his kindness, and the not making a public profession of gratitude to him: And whether this will make a part of the grand inquest, he declares himself unable certainly to judge; but he plainly insinuates, that he thinks it will not; since, among men, it has been looked upon to be a mark of greatness of soul, to despise and overlook such ingratitude, rather than to shew any resentment at it. The only thing therefore for which he supposes men will be accountable, is their injuries and benefits one to another, and these only when done to the public. He afterwards sets himself to shew, that things would be as well ordered in the world without the expectation of a future judgment, as with it; and that the belief of it is no great advantage to society.

Hume declares, that the knowledge of the relation of cause and effect is of the highest importance and necessity; and that all our reasonings concerning matter of fact and experience, and concerning the
existence

existence of any being, are founded upon it; yet he sets himself to shew, that there is no real connection between cause and effect; and that there can be no certain, nor even probable, reasoning from the one to the other. He endeavours to subvert all proofs of a particular providence, of a future state, and of an intelligent Cause of the universe. He speaks of the doctrine of the being of a God, as uncertain and useless. He opposes the arguments from God's distributive justice for a future state, and denies that we have any evidence of any further degrees of justice in God, than we see exercised in this present state.

Lord Bolingbroke insists, that we must not ascribe to God any moral perfections distinct from his physical, especially holiness, justice, and goodness: That he has not these attributes according to the ideas we conceive of them, nor any thing equivalent to these qualities as they are in us; and that, to pretend to deduce moral obligations from these attributes, or to talk of imitating God in his moral attributes, is enthusiasm and blasphemy: That God made the world, and established the laws of this system at the beginning; but that he doth not now concern himself in the affairs of men; or, if he doth, that his providence only extends to collective bodies, but hath no regard to individuals, to their actions, or to events that befall them: That the soul is not a distinct substance from the body; that the whole man is dissolved at death; that the doctrine of future rewards and punishments is a fiction that hath no real foundation in nature and reason; and that, to pretend to argue for future retributions, from the apprehended unequal distributions of this present state, is absurd and blasphemous: That the sanctions of the law of nature and reason relate not to men individually, but collectively considered: That self-love is the only original spring from which our moral duties and affections flow: That polygamy is founded on the law of nature: That there is no such thing as natural shame or modesty. He intimates adultery not to be contrary to the law of nature,

nature, if it can be acted secretly. He seems to think, that the law of nature forbids no incest but that of the highest kind, viz. the conjunction between fathers and daughters, sons and mothers. He insists, that the ground of the obligation of the law of nature, is not its being the will and appointment of God; but its being conducive to human happiness. He holds, that the laws of nature in general, and the particulars of moral duty derived from them, are very uncertain, and in which men have always been very apt to mistake and make wrong conclusions.—[These things from Dr Leland's view of Deistical writers.]

I think, a little sober reflection on these opinions which appear among the deists, weighing them together with the nature of things, may convince us, that a general renunciation of divine revelation, after nations have enjoyed it, would soon bring those nations to be more absurd, brutish and monstrous in their notions and practices, than the heathens were before the gospel came among them. For, (1.) Those nations had many things among them derived originally from revelation, by tradition from their ancestors, the ancient founders of nations, or from the Jews, which led them to embrace many truths contained in the scripture; and they valued such tradition. It was not, in general, their humour to despise such an original of doctrines, or to condemn them because they had their first foundation in divine revelation, but they valued them the more highly on this account; and had no notion of setting them aside, in order to the drawing of every thing from the fountain of their own reason. By this means, they had a great deal more of truth in matters of religion and morality, than ever human reason would have discovered without helps. But now, the humour of the deists is, to reject every thing that they have had from supposed revelation, or any tradition whatsoever, and to receive nothing but what they can clearly see, and draw out the demonstrable evidence of, from the fountain

fountain of their own unassisted reason. (2.) The heathens, by tradition, received and believed many great truths, of vast importance, that were incomprehensible; and it was no objection with them against receiving them, that they were above their comprehension.

But now, it is a maxim with the free-thinkers, that nothing is to be believed but what can be comprehended; and this leads them to reject all the principles of natural religion (as it is called) as well as revealed. For there is nothing pertaining to any doctrine of natural religion, not any perfection of God, no, nor his very existence from eternity, without many things attending it that are incomprehensible. (3.) The heathens of old, in their reasonings, did not proceed in that exceeding haughtiness and dependence on their own mere singular understanding, disdaining all dependence on teaching, as our deists do; which tends to lead one to reject almost all important truths, out of an affectation of thinking freely, and independently, and singularly. Some of the heathens professed their great need of teaching, and of *divine* teaching. (4.) The heathens did not proceed with that enmity against moral and divine truth, not having been so irritated by it. They were willing to pick up some scraps of this truth which came from revelation, which our deists reject all in the lump.

91. If we suppose that God never speaks to, or converses at all with mankind, and has never, from the beginning of the world, said any thing to them, but has perfectly let them alone as to any voluntary, immediate, and direct signification of his mind to them, in any respect teaching, commanding, promising, threatening, counselling or answering them; such a notion, if established, would tend exceedingly to atheism. It would naturally tend to the supposition, that there is no Being that made and governs the world. And if it should nevertheless be supposed, that

that there is some Being that is, in some respect, the original of all other beings; yet, this notion would naturally lead to doubt of his being properly an intelligent, volitive Being; and to doubt of all duties to him implying intercourse, such as prayer, praise, or any address to him, external or internal, or any respect to him at all analogous to that which we exercise towards rulers or friends, or any intelligent beings we here see and know; and so it would tend to overthrow every doctrine and duty of natural religion. Now, in this respect, deism has a tendency to a vastly greater degree of error and brutishness with regard to matters of religion and morality, than the ancient heathenism. For the heathens had no such notion, that the Deity never at all conversed with mankind in the ways above mentioned; but received many traditions, rules, and laws, as supposing they came from God, or the gods, by revelation.

92. Many of the freethinkers of late ages deceive themselves, through the ambiguity or equivocal use of the word *Reason*. They argue, that we must make our reason the highest rule by which to judge of all things, even of the doctrines of revelation; because reason is that by which we must judge of revelation itself. It is the rule on which our judgement of the truth of a revelation depends, and therefore undoubtedly must be that, by which particular doctrines of it must be judged: not considering that the word *reason* is here used in two senses. In the former, viz. in our judging of the divinity of a supposed revelation, the word means the *faculty* of reason taken in the whole extent of its exercise: In the latter, it is the *opinion* of our reason, or some particular opinions that have appeared rational to us. Now, there is a great difference between these two. It is true, the faculty of reason is that by which we are to judge of every thing, as it is the eye by which we see all truth. And, after we have received revelation, still, by the faculty of reason, we receive the particular

cular doctrines of revelation, yea, even those that are most difficult to our comprehension. For, by the faculty of reason we determine this principle, that God knows better than us; and whatever God declares is true. But this is an exceedingly different thing from making an *opinion*, which we first establish without revelation, by reason only, as our rule to judge of particular doctrines which revelation declares. It may be illustrated by this: If there be a man with whom we have the most thorough acquaintance, and have long known to be a person of the soundest judgement and greatest integrity, who goes a journey or voyage to a place where we never were; and, when he returns, gives an account of some strange phenomena or occurrences that he was an eye-witness of there, which we should not have otherwise believed; but we believe them now to be true, because we rely on his testimony. Here, it would be ridiculous for a man to say, that it is unreasonable to believe him, because what he says is not agreeable to reason, (meaning, by *reason*, that particular *opinion* we should have had, independent on his testimony); since reason must be our highest rule, and not his testimony; because it is by our reason that we judge of the testimony; and the credibility and validity of the man that testifies, must be determined by our reason; meaning, in this case, the *faculty* of reason. This would be as unreasonable, as for a man to say, that he never will rely on any representation made by the best microscope or telescope that is different from the representation which he has by his naked eye; because his eye is the rule by which he sees even the optic glass itself, and by which he judges whether it be regularly made, tending to give a true representation of objects: And therefore should pretend to a demonstration of the reasonableness of his conduct herein, by saying, his eye must be the highest rule for him to determine by, because it is by the eye he determines the goodness and sufficiency of the glass itself; and therefore he will cre-

dit no representation made by the glass, wherein the glass differs from his eye; and so will not believe that the planets are round, though they are so represented by a telescope, because they appear full of angles and sharp points to the naked eye; nor will he believe that the blood consists partly of red particles, and partly of a limpid liquor, because it appears all red to the naked eye: Not considering the different sense in which he uses the word *eye*. In the former case, viz. with respect to judging of the goodness of the optic glass, he means the sense of seeing, or the organ of sight. In the latter, when he says he will not believe the representation of the glass, wherein it differs from his eye, because his *eye* is the highest rule; by the *eye*, he means the particular *representation* he has by his eye, separately, and without the glass.

Again: They blunder exceedingly, through not making a distinction between *reason* and a *rule of reason*. They say, that reason is our highest rule by which to judge of all things, and therefore they must judge of the doctrines of revelation by it: whereas, they seem not to consider what they mean by reason being the highest rule. It is true, our faculty of reason or understanding is the judge, or faculty of judging, nay, the only faculty of judging; and not only the highest, but the only judging faculty by which we determine truth and falsehood. But it is not properly our highest rule of judging of truth and falsehood, nor lowest rule neither, nor any rule at all. The judge, and the rule by which he judges, are diverse. A power of discerning truth, and a rule to regulate and determine the use of that power, are quite different things. The rule may be divine revelation, especially in divine matters, and things of religion. As it is with the faculty or sense of seeing, or organ of sight, the sense or organ of sight is not properly the highest means, but the only immediate means we have of seeing or discerning the objects of sight. But if men were talking of rules how to use their eyes, or rules for the using of them

to the best advantage, so as to see most certainly and clearly, or to see the most distant objects, or the minutest objects, so as to have the most certain and full information; it would be ridiculous for any one to say that his eye was the highest rule, or that his sight was the highest rule to regulate his sight.

Sometimes, by the word *reason*, is intended the same as *argument* or *evidence*, which the faculty of reason makes use of in judging of truth: As, when we say we should believe nothing without reason, or contrary to reason; that is, we should not give the assent of our judgements without, or against evidence, or something that appears which argues the thing to be true. But if this be meant by them that assert reason to be a rule superior to revelation, it is absurd in them thus to speak of reason as contradistinguished from revelation. To say, that argument or evidence is a higher rule than revelation, is to make evidence and divine revelation entirely distinct; implying, that divine revelation is not of the nature of evidence or argument. They ought to explain themselves, who assert, that *evidence* is superior to the evidence we have by divine revelation. It is true, divine testimony is not the same thing as argument or evidence in general; because it is a particular sort of evidence. So, there are other particular sorts of evidence; and persons might speak as intelligibly, if they should single out any other kind of evidence, and should assert, that reason or evidence was superior to that sort of evidence. As, for instance, one sort of evidence is human testimony of credible eye-witnesses; another is credible, well-vouched history; another is memory; another is present experience; another is geometrical mensuration; another is arithmetical calculation; another is strict metaphysical distinction and comparison. Now, would it not be an improper and unintelligible way of speaking, to ask, whether evidence was not above experience? or, whether argument was not above mensuration or calculation? If they who plead that reason is a rule to judge of truth
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superior to revelation, by *reason* mean, *that* evidence or argument which convinces reason, or which is worthy to influence the faculty of reason; it seems not to be considered by them, that the evidence or argument which is worthy to influence the faculty of reason, when spoken of in general, comprehends divine testimony, as well as other sorts of evidence; unless they would entirely set aside divine revelation, as not of the nature of argument, and as carrying in it no evidence at all. If this be their meaning, they are deceitful; for this is not what they pretend: since it would entirely change the point in dispute, and alter the whole controversy.

Or if, when they say reason is a higher rule than revelation, they mean reason, exclusive of revelation; or that reason, or such arguments of truth as we have without revelation, is better than divine testimony; that is as much as to say, all other arguments are better than divine testimony. For reason or argument, without divine testimony, comprehends all other arguments that are without divine testimony: and then, this is as much as to say, that divine testimony is the very least and lowest of all possible arguments, that ever occur or can occur to the mind of man, in any measure to influence his judgement; which meaning they will hardly own. On the whole, it is manifest, that, let us turn the words and expressions which way we will, and in what sense soever we understand them, all the boasted proof of their assertion is owing wholly to confusion, and an ambiguous use of terms; talking without ideas, and making sounds without understanding, or fixing any distinct meaning.

Here, if any, in disdain of such an imputation, shall say, "I see no necessity of supposing this assertion to be so unreasonable and unintelligible. By reason, we mean *that* evidence which is seen by reason simply considered; reason itself, without dependence on the dictates of another; viewing things as they are in themselves:" such an objector is mistaken, if

if he thinks he has got clear of the difficulty. All evidence whatsoever, even that by divine revelation, is included in his description of reason. It is by viewing things as they are in themselves, and by judging by our own reason, and not by the reason of another, that we judge there is a divine revelation, and that we judge divine revelation must be agreeable to truth.

Reason judges by viewing things as they are in themselves, not the less because it makes use of a medium of judgement: and when reason makes use of divine testimony as an evidence or medium of judgement, it judges as much by viewing things as they are in themselves, as when it makes use of any other medium of judgement; as, for instance, a measuring rod in judging of distances, a compass in judging of directions and courses, and figures and characters in calculating and determining numbers.

I can think of but one thing more that can be meant, when it is said, that reason is a higher rule than revelation; and that is, that man's reason or understanding is superior to the understanding of that divine Being that gives the revelation or testimony. Whether that be their meaning, I leave them to say.

If any should say, that *reason*, in our inquiries after truth, is to be regarded as a rule superior to experience, this, according to what would be most naturally suggested to the mind by such a saying, and might generally be supposed to be intended by it, according to the more usual acceptation of words, would be a foolish assertion. For by the comparison which takes place in the proposition between *reason* and *experience*, reason would be understood in such a sense as that it might properly be set in opposition to experience, or taken in contradistinction to it; and therefore the proposition must be understood thus, viz. That our highest rule is what our reason would suggest to us, independent of experience, or before we have had experience in the same things that are matters of experience; or in such things as are, or may be, the
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subject of the trial of experience : Or, what appears to the view of our minds to be reason, or what our reason would lead us to suppose without, or before experience, is what we must regard as our highest and most sure rule, even in those matters that afterwards are tried by experience, and wherein experience shews things in a different light from what our reason suggested without experience. Certainly, he that should proceed in this manner in his inquiries after truth, would not be thought wise by considerate persons. And yet it is really true, in some sense, that our reason is our highest rule; and that by which we are to try and judge of all things: even our experience and senses themselves must be tried by it. For we have no other faculty but our reason, by which we can determine of truth or falsehood, by any argument or medium whatsoever. Let the argument be testimony or experience, or what it will, we must judge of the goodness or strength of the argument by reason. And thus it is we actually determine, that experience is so good and sure a medium of proof. We consider the nature of it; and our reason soon shews us the necessary connection of this medium with truth. So we judge of the degree of dependence that is to be had on our senses. It is by reason, as it is by repeated testimonies of the senses; by viewing the agreement of one sense with another, and by comparing, in innumerable instances, the agreement of the testimonies of the senses with other criteria of truth, and so rationally estimating the value of these testimonies.

But if this is what is meant by saying, that our reason is a surer rule than experience, it is an improper way of speaking, and an abuse of language. For, take reason thus; and so reason and experience are not properly set in contradistinction, or put in comparison one with another; for the former includes the latter, as the genus includes the species, or as a whole includes the several particular sorts comprehended in that whole. For, judging by experience is one way of judging by reason; or rather, experience

is one sort of argument, which reason makes use of in judging. And to say that reason is a more sure rule than experience, is to say, that arguing is a more sure rule than a particular way of arguing: or to say that argument (in general) is a more sure rule than that particular sort of argument, viz. experience. Or if, by Reason, is meant the *faculty of reason*, or that power or ability of the mind, whereby it can see the force of arguments; then such an assertion will appear still more nonsensical. For then, it is as much as to say, that the mind's ability to see the force of arguments, is a surer rule, by which to judge of truth, than that particular argument, viz. experience; which is the same as to say, an ability to judge of arguments is a surer argument than that sort of argument, experience; or that a man's understanding is a better rule to understand by, than such a particular means or rule of understanding.

These things which have now been observed concerning reason and experience, when these two are compared as rules by which to judge of truth, may be applied to reason and revelation, or divine testimony, when in like manner compared as distinct rules of truth. To insist, that mens own reason is a superior rule or test of truth to divine revelation, under a pretence, that it is by reason that we must judge even of the authority of revelation; that all pretended revelations must be brought to the test of reason; and that reason is the judge whether they are authentic or not, &c. is as foolish as it would be to assert, for the like reasons, that man's own reason is a test of truth superior to experience. There is just the same fallacy in the arguments that are brought to support one and the other of these foolish assertions; and both are, for reasons equally forcible, very false, or very nonsensical.

If the assertion of those who say, that mens own reason is a higher test of truth than divine revelation, has any sense in it, it must imply a comparison of different sorts of arguments or evidences of truth; and
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so the meaning of it must be, that those evidences of truth, which men find to argue or reason from, before they have the help of divine revelation, or without revelation, are a better criterion of truth, than any discovery or evidence they have by revelation. And their great argument to prove it, is this, that the faculty of reason, or that power of the mind by which it is able to discern the force of evidences of truth, is the only faculty by which we are able to judge of the value and force of revelation itself. But where is the consequence, that, because the faculty of understanding, by which we are able to discern evidence in general, is that faculty which we must make use of to judge of all sorts of evidence; therefore, this or that particular sort of evidence, is better than another sort of evidence? It is just such a sort of arguing, as if a person should go about to demonstrate, that a man could more distinctly see, and more certainly discover, the form and various parts of the planets with the naked eye, than with a telescope; because the eye is that by which we see all visible things, yea, by which we see and discern how to use and to judge of the goodness of telescopes themselves.

In the argument these men use, to prove that reason is a better test of truth than revelation, they wretchedly deceive themselves, by sliding off from the meaning which they give to the word *reason* in the premises, into another meaning of it exceedingly diverse in the conclusion. In the premises, wherein they assert, that reason is that by which we judge of all things, even of revelation itself, they mean either the power of reasoning or of discerning evidence; or the act of reasoning or arguing in general. The consequence they draw is, Therefore reason is a higher test of truth than revelation. Here, if they retained the same sense of the word as in the premises, the conclusion would be perfect nonsense. For then, the conclusion would be thus: The power of discerning evidence, or the action of the mind in using evidence to discern truth, is a better evidence of truth, than that

that particular evidence of it which we have by divine revelation. But this is not what is understood, nor intended to be understood. What is intended in the conclusion, is, that the evidence we have before we have revelation, or independently of it, is better and more certain than revelation itself.

93. The outward provision which God makes through the ages of the world for the temporal benefit and comfort of mankind, in causing his sun to shine upon them, his rain to descend upon them, and in numberless other things, is a great argument that God is not an implacable enemy of mankind, in a settled and full determination finally to cast them off, and never again to admit them to favour: for these kind dispensations of heaven have an abundant shew and appearance of goodness, kindness, and favourableness. They are as so many smiles of heaven on mankind, from which they might justly conceive a hope that God was placable, and was not determined to be their everlasting, irreconcilable enemy. For if this be the case, they are no tokens of goodness, kindness, or favour at all. If their Creator has wholly rejected them, and cast them off, determining never to receive them to favour any more; these things can do them no good; they can be of no significance to them; they are not what they seem to be. The supposition would imply this horrid blasphemy in it, that these are all so many delusive and deceitful smiles. They have a shew of fatherly care and tenderness, and of a disposition in God to favour mankind: but imply no such thing; men being indeed reserved for nothing but wrath and ruin without mercy; there being nothing but irreconcilable hatred hid under the disguise of these smiles. And if God be reconcilable, it will follow, that he must make a revelation to mankind, to make known to them the terms and method of reconciliation. For God, who is offended, alone can tell us, on what terms he is willing to be reconciled; and how he
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will be at peace with us, and receive us to favour. And there surely is nothing, which can be pretended to be any revelation of this kind, if the holy Scripture is not.

Objection : The scriptures are communicated to but few of mankind ; so that, if a revelation of the method of reconciliation be necessary, a very great part of those that enjoy these external benefits and bounties of divine providence, still have no opportunity to obtain reconciliation with God, not having the benefit of that revelation. So that, notwithstanding these seeming testimonies of favour and placableness, it is all one to them, as if God was irreconcilable. For still, for want of the knowledge of the method of reconciliation, it is all one to them, as though there were no such method, and as though no reconciliation were possible.

To this, I answer,

1st, The case of mankind is not just the same as if there were no such thing as reconciliation for mankind, or as though reconciliation were utterly impossible. For although the circumstances of a great part of the world be such, that their reconciliation be very improbable, yet it is not utterly impossible. There is a way of reconciliation, and it is publicly known in the world ; and God ever ordered things so in the world of mankind, so fixing the bounds of their habitation, together with the circumstances of the revelation that has existed in the world, as have afforded opportunity to the generality of the habitable world, that if the minds of men had been as much engaged in the search of divine truth as they ought to have been, they might have felt after God, and found him ; and might probably have come to an acquaintance with divine revelation.

2^d, If there have been some parts of mankind, in some ages, for whom it was next to impossible that they should ever come to know that revelation which God has made, yet that hinders not the force of the argument for God's placableness to sinners, and so that

that there must exist a revelation of a method of reconciliation. The common favours of Providence may be a proof, that God intends favour to some among mankind, but yet be no proof, that he intends that all shall actually have the benefit of his favour. None will deny, but that those outward blessings of God's goodness were intended for the temporal benefit of mankind; and yet there are numbers of mankind that never actually receive any temporal benefit by many of them. None will doubt, but that God aimed at mens outward good, in providing wheat, and other kinds of grain, and grapes, and many other fruits which the earth produces for man's subsistence and comfort in the world: as also the most useful animals, horses, neat cattle, and the like. But yet a very great part of the world were for a long time wholly destitute of the most useful of these. All the innumerable nations that dwelt on this American side of the globe, were from age to age, till the Europeans came hither, wholly destitute of wheat, rye, barley, pease, wine, horses, neat cattle, sheep, goats, swine, poultry, and many other useful animals and fruits, which abounded in the other continent.

And it is probable, that some of those gifts of nature and providence, which are most useful to mankind, were what all men remained without the benefit of for many ages; as metals, wine, and many things used for food, clothing, and habitations. The loadstone, with regard to its polar direction, was doubtless intended for the use of mankind; but yet it is but lately that any of them have had any benefit of it. Glass is a great gift of Providence, and yet but lately bestowed; and also some of the most useful medicines. And with regard to those things which are most universally useful, some have the benefit of them in vastly lesser degrees than others; as the heat of the sun, vegetation, &c.

If it should be further Objected, That, if it be so, that God's true aim in these outward benefits of pro-

vidence, that have the appearances of favour, be real favours to mankind, and so that the true happiness of mankind should be the consequence; one would think it should have the same effect in all places where those blessings are bestowed.

I answer, that it will not follow. God may grant those things in all parts of the world, the main design of which may evidently be the benefit of mankind, and yet not have that effect in all places where they are given. As the rain is a thing, in which the main design of Him who orders the being of such a thing as rain in the world, is making the earth fruitful; yet it does not follow, that he designed this should actually be the effect in all parts of the globe where the rain falls. For it falls on the sea as well as the dry land, which is more than one half of the globe: but yet, there, it cannot answer this intention.

94. The *religion* that is required of us, consists in the disposition and affections of mind which we ought to have towards God, and our behaviour with respect to him. Therefore, in order to know what is that religion that becomes us, we must know, that God is, and what manner of Being he is; what perfections he has, and what concern we have with him; or what notice he takes of us; what relation we stand in to him; and what dependence we have upon him. Not only is it necessary that we should know that God is, and what he is, in order to know what that religion is, which is our duty; but also, it is requisite that we should know those other things mentioned, viz. what concern we have with him, &c. If we have no concern with him, nor he with us; if he has no relation to us, and we have no dependence upon him, and he takes no notice of us, and concerns himself nothing at all with us; then, surely, all will allow, that the foundation of religion, consisting in the regard of our minds and exercise of our hearts,

hearts, and in acts of respect or service towards him, does, at least in a very great measure, cease.

Whatever we hear of the excellencies of a person in China or India, or some distant age, yet, if we have no concern with him, nor he with us, no service from us to him is properly our duty. There can be no intercourse, nothing to excite the exercises and services of friendship, according to the human nature. There can be no application of mind to the person. Excellencies, in such circumstances, do but little to draw forth respect, and engage the heart. According to human nature, such distance and exclusion from all mutual concern are, as to influence on the heart, much the same as exclusion from reality of existence: as it is in the natural and material world, magnitude, and quantity of matter, attract but little at an immense distance. The duties proper in creatures, one towards another, arise from their mutual concern, relations, and connections. So it is with respect to our duty to God. Supposing it could be, and were indeed so, that a superior Being, of great excellency, were the Creator of some other world at an immense distance from this, and we knew of it, and had notice of his Being and excellency; but knew he had no manner of concern with this our creation, and took no notice of us: In how great a degree should we be void of the foundation of religion towards such a Being? And therefore, doubtless, in order to our knowing what that religion is, which is our duty towards God, we must know not only that he exists, and what manner of Being he is; but also, must know the mutual concerns which subsist between us, &c. And therefore, if it be a matter of great necessity and importance, that we should have and exercise that religion that becomes us, it is necessary, and of great importance, that we should have clear notice of God's being and perfections, and of our concern with him; or such manifestations and evidences of his being and perfections, and of the notice he takes of us, and of

our relation to him and dependence on him, as are so clear and full, as to be sufficient to determine and satisfy our minds. And if God looks upon it as a thing of great importance, that we should exercise that religion that becomes us, and much insists upon it that we should; we may be assured, that he also looks upon it as a thing of great importance, that we should have such a clear notice of those things. But we have sufficient evidence, that it is of great importance, that we should exercise that religion that becomes us; and that our Creator looks upon it to be so, and does greatly insist upon it. It is self-evident, that our duty, or that which becomes us, is of importance; for that is what is meant by being of importance, viz. being a thing worthy to be regarded, and the opposite of which is worthy to be avoided. But that which is amiable, being the contrary of what is hateful, is worthy to be regarded, and the contrary to be avoided. But the very notion of a thing becoming us, implies fitness or amiableness, and that the contrary is hateful. And if duty, or becoming temper and behaviour in general, be of importance, then the greatest duties, or those that are most incumbent on us, are of proportionably greatest importance. But that we should have respect to God, who is infinitely the greatest and best of Beings, and whom we have infinitely the greatest concern with and dependence upon, is certainly our greatest duty, and that to which we are under infinitely the greatest obligation.

And as it is of so great importance, that we should exercise that religion that is our duty, so we must suppose, that our Creator looks upon it as such, and that it is proportionably agreeable to his will; or, in other words, it is a thing proportionably fit and amiable in his eye, that we should do so. That God has regard to mens doing their duty, and is not careless about it, is evident from these considerations: It is evident, that God is not negligent of the world he has made. He has made it for his use, and therefore,

fore, doubtless, he uses it; which implies, that he takes care of it, and orders and governs it, that it may be directed to the ends for which he has made it. If God regards the state of the world, he will especially regard the state of the intelligent part of the world, which is transcendently the most important, and that for which all the rest is evidently made, and, without which, all the rest is nothing.

God regards the moral state of the intelligent world, as the well-being and preservation of the world depends upon its moral state. Wickedness tends, above all things, to ruin it; if let alone, it tends to its greatest confusion, disorder, and utter destruction, as a fire that will wholly consume it. And its beauty and excellency, above all things, and indeed summarily, consists in virtue. We see that God takes care of the well-being, good state, regularity and beauty of those parts of the world, that are infinitely of less importance. Therefore, surely, he is not careless about these things in the intelligent world, the highest part of the creation, the head of all, that is next to himself. And from what has been said, it is evident, that he will not be careless about man's duty to him, or respect to him or his religion, which is infinitely the most considerable and important part of his duty. God cannot be indifferent about reasonable creatures respect to him; whether they love or hate him; whether they are his friends or enemies; whether they bless or curse him; whether they fall in with his design in creating them and the world, or set themselves against it, and live in opposition to it; not only as he loves what is beautiful, and hates what is hateful; but as he loves himself, loves his own end, seeks what he seeks, and is inclined to what he is inclined to. It is evident, that as God has made man an intelligent creature, capable of knowing his Creator, and discerning God's aims in creation, and particularly in creating himself, by seeing the nature and tendency of things; and has made him a volitive and active creature, capable of willing,

willing, and actively falling in with his aims, and promoting them; so it must be, that he has made him to serve him, and consequently, to have respect to him, and love him.

From these things, it must needs happen, according to what was before laid down, that God looks upon it as of great importance, that men have and exercise that religion that becomes them; and that he greatly insists upon it. Therefore, it follows, from things before observed, that he greatly insists upon it; that men should exercise that respect to him that is agreeable to his nature and perfections, and his concern with us, the relation he stands in to us, and the dependence we have on him. Having established these things, I would now proceed farther, and say, that, seeing God so much insists upon it, that we should have and exercise that religion towards him, that becomes his perfections and that concern we have with him and dependence we have upon him; we may well conclude, that he will not deny mankind the means necessary to render them capable of this, and therefore will not deny them the necessary means of some clear, evident, and distinct knowledge, not only of his existence and perfections, but also of the relations he stands in to us, and of the things wherein we are dependent on him: seeing that (as has been proved) the religion that becomes us towards God, depends on these things as its necessary ground, as well as on his existence and perfections. In order to a proper and necessary foundation and support of the religion founded on God's being, perfections, and on our particular relation to God, and dependence on him, it is not sufficient that we only have some uncertain conjecture concerning these things; but that we should have clear notice of them, and positive, satisfying evidence. Such is the nature of man, that he does not feel entire friendship and respect towards an object, of whose existence and excellency, notice of him, and concerns with him, he uncertainly conjectures. Therefore,
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it is doubtless agreeable to the will of God, that mankind should have clear and full notice of these things; as it must be his will to afford necessary means for that religion which becomes them. If God did not afford necessary means for the exercise and support of that religion which becomes us towards God; then it would follow, that he did not take care for the existence and support of that which, in his own eyes, is most important in the regularity, beauty, and order of the world. But, from what has been already proved, God does take care of this; and therefore, doubtless, will give mankind necessary means for the clear, evident, and distinct knowledge of the concern he has with them, and their dependence on him, at least in its more important articles. As for instance, we may conclude, that he will not deny mankind sufficiently clear and evident knowledge of his concern with them as their Creator and Preserver, and the Author of all their outward good things, and as their Judge to recompense their behaviour. Or, if there be any other relations that God stands in to them, of like importance; then, doubtless, it is the will of God to give like clear and full evidence of them also. But now, from these things I infer, that if there be any such thing as forgiveness of sin, and salvation from sin and its evil consequences, then God has certainly given a revelation to mankind, to make this clearly and distinctly known, together with the terms, method, and means of it. Because, if so, these things will follow:

(1.) That then God sustains a relation entirely new, and distinct from the natural relation of a Creator, Preserver, &c. viz. that of a *Saviour*. And we have a new concern with God, and a new dependence on him, entirely distinct from that which is by nature, but no less important; which renders a new kind of regard to God, and so a new sort of religion, proper and becoming in man, corresponding with this new relation, and these his new concerns with God.

(2.) That we cannot have any clear, certain, and distinct knowledge of this new relation, &c. any other way, than by divine revelation. I shall shew each of these in their order.

1st, If there be any forgiveness of the sins we are guilty of, and deliverance from sin and its consequences; then God stands in a new relation to us, even that of a Saviour, and we have new concerns with him, founded upon it; which new relation is no less important, than that of the Author and Preserver of our nature, and the Bestower of natural enjoyments; and consequently, new regards to God, and new duties founded on this new relation, become us, which are not less important than the duties of natural religion. That the relation of a Saviour from our sin and its consequences, is no less important than the other, will appear from the following considerations: It is evident, that mankind in general, have forsaken and renounced the Author and Preserver of their beings, and the Fountain of all that pertains to their well-being; *i. e.* their hearts have forsaken him, in that they do not love God so much as they do other things. Therefore, they have taken away their hearts from God, have dethroned God in their hearts, and have given to other things their hearts that belong to God; have set up other things in the throne of God. They have subjected God in their hearts to things that are infinitely mean, and worthless and vile, in comparison of God. This is attended unavoidably with enmity to God. As rebelling against a lawful prince, and setting up another in his stead, is turning enemy to the lawful prince: So men naturally disregard God's glory and supreme dominion. They have truly no sincere consent of heart to that glory, or delight in any such thing; but rather are against it, and have naturally no relish for the infinite supreme beauty of the Divine nature, nor any proper gratitude to him, as the Fountain of all good that belongs to our being. And this certainly is rebellion and revolt, and a renouncing and casting off the Supreme Being, as to his infinite excellency and

and dignity, and as to that supreme dominion of his, founded on that dignity, and the relation of a Creator, Preserver, and Fountain of all good. Now, it is pretty manifest, that by forsaking and renouncing the Author of our being, and of all good, and thus turning enemy to him, we must forfeit his favour and friendship, and the benefits we derive from this Fountain of good; and that implies, that our conduct deserves that we should be totally undone. A casting off the Author of our being, deserves plainly that he should cast us off; that he should cause that our being should not be for our good. Our becoming his enemies, deserves that he should be and act as our enemy; and that he should cause our being to be the means of our misery. And if we have deserved these things, then, unless we are forgiven, at least in part, these things will certainly come upon us.

From these things it appears, that if we are ever forgiven, and restored from this utterly ruined and undone state, it will be as great a thing as our creation, and equivalent to a new creation from nothing, in order to a new preservation, and new enjoyment of the benefits of being. So that hereby God stands in a new relation to us, even that of a Saviour; and we have a new concern with him, and dependence upon him, of equal importance with that of our Creator, Preserver, &c. And if the misery that we deserve, be worse than a state of non-existence, as it would be easy to prove that it must be infinitely worse, then this new relation of a Saviour is infinitely more important than the other.

From whence it follows, that new duties arise; new regards towards God; and a new religion becomes us, which is no less important than natural religion. And it will further follow from things before shewn, that it must be agreeable to the word of God, that we should have means of clear, full and distinct notice of this new relation that God stands in to us as our Saviour, and his concern with us, and the manner of our dependence on him in that matter:

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ter : and consequently, that we have sufficient means for a certain knowledge, that God is willing to forgive us ; and of the nature of salvation, and the terms on which it may be obtained ; how far we may be restored to favour ; what happiness such sinful creatures may hope to enjoy ; the way and means of salvation, and the way in which we may obtain an interest in it : in order to know the duties which arise from these things, the regards which become us towards God as our Saviour, and the dispositions and affections and exercises answerable to the concern we have with God in that affair. As, in order to the subsistence and support of natural religion, we need clear manifestations of the perfections of God, and clear evidences of our dependence on God in the course of nature and common providence ; so, in order to the subsisting of the new religion proper to be exercised towards God as our Saviour, we need a clear manifestation of the work of salvation, and of the manner of the exercise and displays of God's perfections in that work, and our particular dependence on him in that affair. And therefore, from what has been before observed, it is doubtless agreeable to the will of God, that we should have such clear manifestations and evidences : and if this cannot be without a revelation, then it is doubtless the will of God, that we should have a revelation ; *i. e.* if there be any such thing as forgiveness and salvation for us. And this is what I would now proceed to shew,

2dly, That we cannot have any certain and distinct knowledge of these things concerning our restoration and salvation, without a revelation. It is said by some, that the light of nature and reason is sufficient to teach us, that a good God stands ready to forgive sinners on their hearty repentance.

But I think it plain, that our reason alone never could give a clear and evident notice of this. A wise governor, in governing, will not be influenced wholly and only by goodness and pity. Wisdom,
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on many accounts, and in many cases, may prevent his forgiving offenders. And who could tell in what manner wisdom might influence and determine the Supreme Ruler of the world in this matter? Who could tell what ends he might have in view, to induce him not to forgive men, who, in the manner before mentioned, had forsaken and renounced him, and turned enemies to him? We see by fact and experience, that it does not necessarily follow from God's goodness, that he will prevent *all* the misery of his creatures; but that, nevertheless, his wisdom induces him to send upon them innumerable and extreme calamities. So that his wisdom causes him not to do every thing, that, in itself considered, would be an act of goodness. Otherwise, not only would he prevent all misery, but make all his creatures ten thousand times happier than they are, and would make ten thousand times more creatures to be happy than he does make. It is natural to suppose, that other things become the Supreme Governor of the world, besides pity and goodness: and particularly, that justice and hatred of sin become him. It is not natural to suppose, that he cannot be provoked or offended by injuriousness, and an unreasonable spirit and treatment; and particularly, by an injurious disposition and behaviour towards Himself, in ingratitude, enmity, and contempt. At least, we cannot be *certain* from the light of nature, that he may not be provoked by these things. If we may judge by what seems to be dictated by the hearts of the generality of mankind through the face of the earth, and in all ages, it is natural for the mind of man to suppose, that the Deity is greatly provoked by such things. And if he is provoked by sin, and does greatly abhor and resent it, it is natural to suppose, that he is disposed to punish it, and that with severity. This also agrees with the notions of mankind in all ages and nations.

And if other perfections besides goodness, such as justice, holiness, hatred of sin, and wisdom as it regards

the most perfect state of the universal system in the whole series of events; I say, if such other perfections must have their ends regarded, and so have a hand in determining, with respect to offenders, rebels, and enemies, whether they shall be forgiven, and received into favour; and if any such, how many, and who, and when, and to what degree, and what benefits they shall receive; and in what way they shall be saved, and by what means, on what terms, &c.; How shall it be clearly determined, without a revelation, how great a hand those other perfections, besides goodness, may have in this affair; and how great a regard will be paid to other ends besides the ends of mere pity and goodness; how many and various the ends may be, which God, in his wisdom, may see fit to provide for, and how important they may be in his eyes? Who can tell how far he may think fit to proceed in punishing, to vindicate his own majesty, to maintain his own authority and the dignity of his government, and to maintain inviolate the grand rule of government? And who can tell what may be left for the system of universal existence, taken in its utmost extent, and with regard to the whole of its duration, and the eternal series of events? Will not reason say, that, if God be perfectly wise, he will order the methods of his proceeding in the moral government of the world, so as to make provision for the obtaining of the best ends in the best manner; meaning by *best*, that which is so on an universal and perfect view of all things, in their utmost extent, and utmost duration? And how can reason alone fully and clearly determine and satisfy those, who are so infinitely far from being capable of such a view, what is best in this sense?

So, if we suppose that it were known and determined, that it is God's will that there should be some way of salvation; reason will determine, that the method and means, terms and degrees, &c. shall be such as are wisest and best in the foregoing sense, viz. with regard to the influence of each part of the scheme or method

thod of salvation, on the whole extent and duration of existences, comprehending that infinite variety of particular beings, circumstances and events. But, who will say, that mens reason alone is sufficient to determine what method of salvation is wisest in this sense? what degree of mercy, what deliverance and happiness, what means of salvation, what terms of enjoying the benefits of it, will have the best and most perfect influence in such a sense? Will any say, that mens understanding and reason alone make it certain, that the infinitely wise, holy and righteous Governor of the world, stands ready to forgive all offenders, how great soever their offence, and how far soever they go in their opposition, rebellion, enmity, ingratitude and contempt; and how long soever they continue in these things; and how far soever they proceed in acting upon their enmity and contempt? If not, then who shall set the bounds? can man's reason fix the limits, and say that men may go so far in offending, and yet find mercy, and no farther?

Reason alone cannot certainly determine, that God will not insist on some satisfaction for injuries he receives. If we consider what have in fact been the general notions of mankind, we shall see cause to think, that the dictates of mens minds, who have been without revelation, have been contrariwise, viz. that the Deity will insist on some satisfaction. Repentance makes some satisfaction for many injuries that men are guilty of one towards another; because it bears some proportion to the degree of injury. But reason will not certainly determine, that it is proper for God to accept of repentance as some satisfaction for an offence, when that repentance is infinitely disproportionate to the heinousness of the offence, or the degree of injuriousness that is offered. And reason will not certainly determine, that the offence of forsaking and renouncing God in heart, and treating him with such indignity and contempt, as to set him below the meanest and vilest things, is not immensely greater, and more heinous, than any injury

offered to men ; and that therefore all our repentance and sorrow fall infinitely short of proportion in measure and degree. If it be said, that we may reasonably conclude, and be fully satisfied in it, that a good God will forgive our sin on repentance ; I ask, what can be meant by repentance in the case of them that have no love nor true gratitude to God in their hearts, but who discover such an habitual disregard and contempt of God in their conduct, as to treat created things, of the lowest value, with greater respect than him ? If it be said, that thereby is meant being sorry for the offence ; I ask, whether that sorrow is worthy to be accepted as true repentance, that does not arise from any change of heart, or from a better mind, a mind more disposed to love God, and honour him, being now so changed as to have less disregard and contempt ? whether or not the sorrow which arises only from fear and self-love, with a heart still in rebellion against God, be such as we can be certain will be accepted ? If not, how shall a man, who at present has no better heart, but yet is greatly concerned for himself through fear, know how to obtain a better heart ? How does it appear, that he, if he tries only from fear and self-love, can make himself better, and make himself love God ? what proper tendency can there be in the heart to make itself better, until it sincerely repents of its present badness ? and how can the heart have sincerity of repentance of its present badness, until it begins to be better, and so begins to forsake its badness, by truly disapproving it, from a good disposition, or a better tendency arising in it ? If the disposition remain just the same, then no sincere disapprobation arises ; but the reigning disposition, instead of destroying, on the contrary approves and confirms itself. The heart can have no tendency to make itself better, until it begins to have a better tendency : for therein consists its badness, viz. having no good tendency or inclination. And to begin to have a good tendency, or, which is the same thing, to begin to have a sincere inclination

inclination to be better, is the same thing as to begin already to be better. So that it seems, that they that are now under the reigning power of an evil heart, can have no ability to help themselves; how sensible soever they may be of their misery, and concerned through fear and self-love to be delivered; but they need this from God, as part of their salvation, viz. that God should give them sincere repentance, as well as pardon and deliverance from the evil consequences of sin. And how shall they know, without revelation, that God will give sinners a better heart, to enable them truly to repent; or in what way they can have any hope to obtain it of him? And if it were so, that men could obtain some sincere repentance of their being wholly without that love of God that they ought to have; yet how can reason determine, that God will forgive their sin, until they wholly forsake it? or until their repentance is perfect? until they relinquish all their sinful contempt, ingratitude and regardlessness of God? or, which is the same thing, until they fully return to their duty, *i. e.* to that degree of love, honour, gratitude and devotedness to God, that is their duty? If they have robbed God, who can certainly say that God will forgive them, until they restore all that they have robbed him of, and give him the whole that he claims by the most absolute right? But where is any man that repents with such a perfect repentance? and if there be ever any instances of it in this world, who will say, that it is in every man's power to obtain it? or that there certainly are no lower terms of forgiveness? and if there are, who can tell certainly where to set the bounds, and say precisely to what degree a man must repent? How great must his sorrow be in proportion to his offences? &c. Or, who can say, how long a man's day of probation shall last? Will reason alone certainly determine, that if a man goes on for a long time presumptuously in his contempt, rebellion and affronts, presuming on God's goodness, depending that though he does thus abuse

his grace as long as he pleases, yet if he repents at any time, God will forgive him, and receive him to favour, forgiving all his presumptuous aggravated rebellion, ingratitude and provocation, and will receive him into the arms of his love? will reason alone fully satisfy the mind, that God stands ready to pardon and receive to favour such a sinner, after long continuance in such horrid presumption and most vile ingratitude? Or, will reason fully determine for a certainty, that God will do it, if men thus presumptuously spend their youth, the best part of their lives, in obstinate and ungrateful wickedness, depending that God will stand ready to pardon afterwards? and, in short, how can reason alone be sufficient to set the bounds, and say how long God will bear with and wait upon presumptuous sinners? how many acts of such ingratitude and presumption he will be ready to forgive, and on what terms? &c. I say, how can reason fix these limits, with any clear evidence that shall give the mind a fixed establishment and satisfaction?

Therefore, if there be any such thing as the forgiveness and salvation of sinful men; new relations of God to men, and concerns of God with men, and a new dependence of men on God, will arise, no less important, and probably much more important, than those which are between God and man, as God is his Creator, and the author of his natural good. And as God must manifest his perfections in new displays of them, in a new work of redemption or salvation, contrived and ordered by his infinite wisdom, and executed by his power, in a perfect consistence with his justice and holiness, and a greater manifestation of his goodness, than is made in God's works as the author of nature; so these things must be the foundation of new regards to God, new duties, and a new religion, founded on those displays of God's perfections in the work of salvation, and on the new relations God sustains towards men, and the new dependence of men on God, and new obligations laid
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on men in that work, which may be called revealed religion, different from that natural religion which is founded on the works of God, as the Creator and the Author of nature, and our concerns with God in that work ; though not at all contrary to it, or subversive of it ; but in addition to it, and in perfect agreement with it.

The light of nature teaches *that* religion which is necessary to continue in the favour of the God that made us ; but it cannot teach us *that* religion which is necessary to our being restored to the favour of God, after we have forfeited it.

95. Porphyry would have it, that the Book of Daniel was forged after the times of Antiochus Epiphanes. Against this the following things do argue.

(1.) Alphonsus Turretinus, quoted by Stapferus, observes, " That among the whole nation of the Jews, there never was any controversy concerning this matter." This would be exceedingly strange, if the book had been written so late as the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, which was about four hundred years after the Captivity ; especially when this book has been received among them, not only as a book truly written by Daniel, but also, as a genuine writing of his, universally received into the Jewish canon as part of the Holy Scriptures, and as such read in their synagogues as their canon, and has been delivered down from generation to generation. It does not appear, that after Malachi's death, ever any pretended to have the spirit of prophecy among them, or to palm any writing of his own on the people as of divine inspiration. There seems to have been prevailing among them no humour of forgery of any such kind. And, if there had been any such fictitious pretence started after several hundred years entire cessation, it is in the highest degree incredible that it should be received by all the people, and this too at once, without any great controversy about the matter, and allowed to be a divine writing. People
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are apt to be startled and alarmed at new things, to which they have been very much unused, and which are above all that any of them have long pretended to, claiming an honour far above all that any have laid claim to, for some ages.

And especially, it is unlikely that they would, without much controversy, all agree to give this new book a place in the canon of their Scriptures, so long after their canon had been settled, and had remained unaltered and without addition, as being supposed to be finished and sealed up. The canon of holy and divine writings, among them, was a very sacred thing; that to which they paid a vast regard. And so great an addition, so new-made, so long after all the rest, must needs have made a great noise.

It is also to be observed, that, so late as this, there were among them a set of men who made it their business to study and teach the word of God contained in the canon of their Scriptures, containing what they called the Law and the Prophets: and they had synagogues every where, all over the land, and in all parts of the world; and every where it was the established custom to read the Law and the Prophets in their synagogues.

Now, who can think, that a book forged after the times of Antiochus Epiphanes, could have been introduced into their sacred canon, as a divine book, one of the books of their holy prophets, to be kept and read in their synagogues, by the whole people, through the land of Canaan, and through the whole world, without any remarkable controversy, or any memorable noise or ado?

It is farther to be considered, that this book appears with an assertion of its being written by the prophet Daniel, in the time of the Captivity. In it Daniel speaks of himself as the writer, Dan. viii. 1. &c.; ix. 2.; and x. 11, 12. We are told expressly that he wrote his visions, Dan. vii. 1, 2.; and that he was commanded to write his prophecies in a book, chap. xii. 4. (see Witius's Miscellan. p. 254.); and the

the book is received and put into the Jewish canon under his name.

But if this book appeared first under Daniel's name, after the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, the whole Jewish nation must know, that it was a new book to them, and that they had never heard of any such book before. Therefore great doubts would most naturally immediately arise in their minds, how it should come to pass, if this book were written at the time of the Captivity, by so great a prophet, of such exceeding fame, that it should now first appear, and never be heard of till now. It would be strange indeed, if, under these circumstances, it should be received universally all over the world, with such high credit, as to be added to the sacred canon by all, without any remarkable controversy.

Surely many strange things must be supposed in the people to make this credible; and, among others, this must be supposed, viz. that there was a strange credulous humour in the people, as to things of this kind, a fondness for adding to their canon, and an aptitude to receive any new writing as of sacred authority. But nothing of this appears from any other instance. No other new writing was thus received among them. It is true, fabulous writings were forged among them, as many strange stories in their Apocrypha; but were never received among them, or any part of them, as part of the canon of their scriptures.

It is farther to be considered, that the Jews were divided into opposite contending sects, who differed greatly among themselves, and had great controversy one with another; and, among other things, about their canon. The Saducees differed greatly from the Pharisees; the former admitted only the five books of Moses into their canon, though they did not deny the other writings to be really written by those whose names they bore. Surely these would have made a great noise, if the rest of the Jews had so easily received and made so much of a writing so lately forged,

forged, especially seeing Dan. xii. 2. is so expressly against their most favourite tenet as to a resurrection. This sect, at least, would have kept alive the remembrance of the folly of the rest of the Jews. The Samaritans also, who lived in the midst of the country, and were such bitter enemies of the Jews, and disliked the writings of the prophets, would have been forward to expose such folly of the Jews.

The matter of the first finding and receiving this remarkable book, and adding it to the canon, must have been a famous event, and have made a noise on several accounts, not only by the controversies raised thereby, but as a great and remarkable event in the series of events attending the state of things amongst them.

But, that all should be without the least trace or footstep in history, or any remaining account of any such event; that the whole affair should presently sink into oblivion, and so universally pass among the people, as though this book had always been part of their canon, and universally received as such even from the Captivity, is quite incredible.

But thus it is, that no trace of any such event remains; no hint of any time that this book first appeared after the Captivity, or of any controversy about its being truly the writing of Daniel, or about its being received as a part of the canon, among any that received more than the Pentateuch; either in any records or writings of the Jews, or histories or monuments of any other nation or sect: though the book be spoken of particularly in every ancient writing, as in Josephus, who expressly speaks of this book, as received and read among the Jews, as of the most certain and undoubted authority. (See Witsii Miscell. p. 254.)

This book is spoken of in the evangelists as cited by Christ, as a part of the Jewish Scriptures, and by the apostle Paul, Heb. xi.; and there is no appearance of any controversy about the book in his time; and before that, the book of Daniel is plainly referred to, in

in the first book of the Maccabees, second chapter, 59. and 60. verses; where the glorious fruit of the faith of Ananias, Mishael and Azarias, is spoken of, and of Daniel in his preservation from the mouths of the lions.

(2.) The Book of Daniel is extant in the translation of the Seventy; which was made into Greek before the times of Antiochus Epiphanes. (See Pool's *Synopsis Prolegomena in hunc librum.*)

(3.) Josephus gives an account of this book's being shewn to Alexander the Great, by Jaddua the high-priest. So Stapferus, Prideaux, and Witsii Miscell. p. 255.

(4.) Stapferus (tom. ii. p. 1081.) observes as follows: "I add this, which seems to me to have the
" greatest weight, that if this book had been written
" after the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, its surreptitious insertion into the sacred canon, could
" not have been concealed, on account of the great
" length of time which intervened between the life
" of Daniel, and the publishing of this prophecy or
" book, and the reception of it into the canon: For
" this time comprehends the space of about four
" hundred years. Who therefore can persuade himself, that, at such a late period, this book, containing prophecies, having the name of Daniel prefixed to it, and relating most important facts which had already taken place, crept in by fraud, and was by the common consent of the Jewish people, (for otherwise it could not have come to pass), received into the canon of scripture?"

(5.) The greater part of the book is written in genuine Hebrew, (See Wits. Miscell. p. 255.); and it is not likely, that a book forged four hundred years after the Hebrew had ceased to be spoken among the people, would have been so. Other fabulous books, that were written among them after the Captivity, were not written in that language.

(6.) Other things are foretold in this book, besides those which came to pass in the days of Antiochus,

no less wonderful, and no less plainly and exactly agreeing with the events which came to pass in later times ; as, the prophecies concerning the Roman empire ; and some of them have come to pass many ages since that time, yea, many ages since Christ's time.

(7.) The prophet Ezekiel makes mention of Daniel, as one of the most holy men ; and as one of the greatest and most familiar friends of God, and also as one of the wisest men that ever existed in the world ; Ezek. xiv. 14, 20., and xxviii. 3. These things may well lead us to suppose, that he was a great prophet. If he was a great prophet, it would be strange that none of his prophecies were written in that age, when the prophets, especially all that were of great note, wrote their prophecies.

96. That Christ had the spirit of prophecy, the destruction of Jerusalem was many ways a remarkable proof.

(1.) He often foretold it, with its time, and circumstances, and consequences ; and that great and extraordinary event, in all its dreadful circumstances and great consequences, exactly answered his predictions. And that it did so, abundantly proved that he was a true prophet, and that the word in his mouth, that he spake in the name of God, was the truth, and indeed the word of God ; and consequently, that his doctrine concerning himself was the word of God, or was divine doctrine.

And here, this is to be observed, that in the other desolations and captivities that had been in Israel, God sent prophets to foretel them, and forewarn the people of them, especially the prophets Hosea and Amos. And, what abundant predictions and forewarnings were given of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, and their captivity into Babylon, by many prophets, *e. g.* Isaiah, Micah, Huldah, (2 Kings xxii. 16.) Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel ; though that destruction was but a little thing in comparison with the second destruction by the Romans ;

mans; and the captivity that followed but a trifle, and of short continuance, in comparison of that which has followed the latter. And therefore, it is altogether unlikely that God should send no prophet at all to predict or forewarn the people of this, but that there should be a perfect silence about it for more than 500 years before it happened. But it was not so; the people had a far greater, more remarkable, and more affecting warning and predictions of this, than of the other: not by a prophet that spoke on earth, but by the Prophet of prophets, the great Prophet of God, the only begotten Son of God, that is, the Lord from heaven.

In other respects, God made his hand, in this last destruction, far more visible, both by an extraordinary interposition, in the strange and unusual incidents and circumstances of it, and also in extraordinary signs, forerunners and presages of it, (See No. 48.) than in former destructions; which is another circumstance that makes it the more incredible that God should not interpose and manifest himself in this respect also, viz. in forewarning of it, and giving the reasons of it by the Spirit of prophecy. It appears it was the will of God to give previous notice of it, by extraordinary presages, in abundance. Why, then, should there be a total silence in God's more usual manner of presignification by prophecy?

(2.) Christ, who thus exactly foretold this great event, declared, at the same time, the reason why God would bring such a judgement; and he declared it should be for their rejection of him, and their contempt and malignity towards him, his gospel, and his church; as the prophets who foretold the destruction of Israel and Jerusalem of old, withal declared the reasons of it. And it would be a strange thing, if that which has been far above all others the greatest judgement that ever God brought on his people Israel, which, in its duration, has continued much longer than the whole time of their dwelling in the land of Canaan, should be brought on them, without

any one to tell them the reason of it, and leave them all the while in the dark about it. And it is reasonable to suppose, that He who was let so particularly and exactly into the secret of the divine will with respect to this event, was able also truly to declare for what reason and end it was brought to pass. But, as there was no other forewarning of the event, since Daniel's time, (who intimated that it should be for rejecting the Messiah), except Christ's prediction; so, no other reason was given but that which he gave, which therefore should be received as the true reason. But, if God brought that destruction for not receiving Christ, how great a testimony of God is this to Christ's divine authority!

(3.) Christ foretold this great event, as that which he himself would bring to pass; Luke xix. 27. That it should come by his forsaking them, and not protecting them; Matt. xxiii. 34,—39.; Luke xiii. 34, 35. That it should be his curse, represented by his cursing the barren fig-tree; That it should be by his coming; Luke xvii. 30. with context, and Matt. xxiv. 3, &c.

And how the fulfilment of such a prediction, with such a circumstance, is often spoken of in the Old Testament as an evidence of the divinity of the prophet; See No. 49.

(4.) The circumstances and incidents of this great event, were such, as remarkably shewed it to be the will of God, that the Mosaic dispensation should be abolished, and to shew that God thenceforward would have no more regard to the peculiar institutions or promises of it, (See No. 48.) Besides, the consequence in blotting out the family of Aaron, and tribe of Levi, by the confusion of their tribes, and their temple and land being so long in desolation, and the people in dispersion; by which means God has now made it impossible for the rules of that dispensation to be upheld, for a much longer time than ever they were attended; which is a great testimony from heaven that that dispensation is at an end, and consequently

frequently that the Messiah, before that, had appeared; and that the doctrine of Christ, in which he taught, that the time was come that men should no more worship in that mountain, nor at Jerusalem, but should worship God in spirit and in truth, was the word of God, and that He was the Messiah.

(5.) That the punishment of the Jews had so many shrewd marks and signatures of the displeasure of God, for their despising, evil-treating, and crucifying Jesus, is another thing that makes this awful event a seal of his divine mission and authority. See No. 48.

(6.) That Christ's followers, the Christians that were in the city, were, by a wonderful providence, generally delivered, being guided by Christ's prophetic directions. See No. 48.

97. That one great event of the conversion of the Gentile world from idols, to the acknowledgement and worship of the God of Israel, together with the acknowledgement of himself (the Messiah), and subjection to him, so often foretold as what should be the great work and distinguishing honours of the Messiah, is a great and glorious seal and evidence of the divine mission of Jesus of Nazareth, and of his true Messiahship. To set this in its proper light, the following things may be considered.

(1.) How often this is foretold, and how copiously and abundantly it is insisted on, as a great, remarkable, and wonderful event, which the Messiah should accomplish. [See Fulfilment of Prophecies of Messiah, § 121,—137. designed to be published in the sequel of these Miscellanies.]

(2.) It is plainly foretold as a great, glorious, and most distinguishing work of the Messiah, and his peculiar honour, thus to turn the heathen world from idolatry, to the acknowledgement and worship of the God of Israel, and to bring them to submit to him, and trust in him, as their Teacher, Lawgiver, and Saviour.

See in what a pompous manner this great honour is promised to the Messiah, in the xlii. of Isaiah, 1,—9. It is promised as the Messiah's great reward, and peculiar manifestation of the great and distinguishing love of God to him; Psal. ii. 8.; Isa. liii. latter end, and Psal. cx. It is prophesied of, as a mighty and peculiar work of God; compared to which, that of Abraham's victory over the kings, and their armies, was but the shadow, with a challenge to the gods of the heathens, and all their abettors, to try their strength with him; Isa. chap. xl. xli. xlii.

(3.) Though, according to the modern Jews, some of the doctrines that Christ has taught the Gentiles, are very erroneous, as that he was the Messiah, &c.; yet, it is indisputable, that he has introduced and established among the Gentiles those same great and important things, which it was foretold should be introduced by the Messiah. He has brought them to forsake all their ancient idols, to destroy all their images of silver, gold, brass and iron, wood and stone, and utterly abandon all things of that nature. He has brought them to forsake the worship of the sun, moon, and stars, and all the host of heaven, and to forsake the worship of devils, and of all creatures in heaven above, and in the earth beneath, and in the waters under the earth; to destroy the altars, statues, temples and oracles of these false gods, with all their idolatrous rites. He has overthrown all those kinds of idolatry that were spoken of in the Old Testament, as practised by the heathen nations round about the land of Canaan, and in all countries far and near that were known in those times; has abolished all those heathenish practices that were condemned in the Old Testament, in Israel, and in other nations; has brought them to profess and worship the only one God, who in six days made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is; to worship Jehovah, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; the same God who brought the children of Israel out of Egypt, led them through the wilderness, and brought them into

into Canaan, and dwelt in their tabernacle and temple, and spoke to them of old by their prophets; and to profess subjection to his commands, particularly those ten commands delivered by Moses, and written in two tables of stone, and to receive the whole of his written word, delivered to them by Moses and the prophets; to receive all those commands in these writings, which God always insisted upon as of greatest weight and importance; and to use the book of Psalms in their public worship.

And as to those doctrines which the Jews call errors, which Jesus taught the nations, the chief of them is, that he was the Messiah. And the supposing that to be an error, is a perfect plain, bold begging of the question. For it is implied in the prophecies, that when the Messiah did indeed come, this is one thing that he should teach the nations and bring them to acknowledge, that they would submit to him as the great Messiah. And, if Jesus had not brought the nations to acknowledge this with respect to himself, it would have been an evidence against him.

Another error which they suppose he taught, was, that he was God. But this is certainly agreeable to the prophecies of their own scriptures, which often teach that the Messiah should be God.

Another is the doctrine of the Trinity: But this, also, is plainly agreeable to their own scriptures.

Another is the abolition of the ceremonial law: But this was foretold, as what should be done by the Messiah; and therefore, is rather a confirmation of Jesus Christ as the Messiah, and a plain instance of his fulfilling the prophecies.

(4.) The idolatry which Christ delivered the nations from, is that same kind of idolatry which it was foretold the Messiah should abolish. This is exceedingly plain in the xl. xli. and following chapters of Isaiah. It was that kind of idolatry by images, &c. which had been practised by the nations round about Canaan, and by the heathen nations that were famed in the history of the Old Testament.

(5.) It may be considered, how great and important a work such a change and conversion of the world is in its nature and kind. It is represented as a great work of God to heal the diseases of the body; but it is a much greater, to heal the diseases of the mind. Opening the eyes of the blind is spoken of in the Old Testament as a great work of God; but much greater, to deliver the heathen world from their exceeding spiritual blindness. Sin is the most pernicious fatal disease, as is abundantly manifest in the Old Testament, as well as the New. And the heathenism and idolatry of the world is often spoken of as the greatest disease of the world. Idolatry is spoken of as a sin peculiarly abominable and fatal. It is emphatically called that abominable thing which God hates. It is represented as a great work of God, to cause light to shine out of darkness. But the heathenish darkness that overspreads the world, is often represented as the most dreadful darkness. Delivering the heathen world from this disease and calamity, is spoken of as a thing far beyond their own power, Isa. xlv. 19, 20. "And none considereth in his heart, neither is there knowledge nor understanding to say, I have burnt part of it in the fire, &c. He seedeth on ashes: A deceived heart hath turned him aside that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?"

God's appearing above the idols of the nations, and getting the victory over them in instances infinitely less than this, is spoken of as a great work of God; a glorious display of his power, majesty, and greatness; as, his appearing above the idols of Egypt, in the thing wherein they dealt proudly. How much greater was the victory of Christ over the idols of the nations! How much greater the overthrow! How much greater that dominion and empire of theirs which Christ overthrew, and wherein their pride was most remarkably manifested, and their opposition was vastly greater, even that which they made for 300 years successively, first by the Jews, and afterwards by

by the heathen world, in ten successive general persecutions, and otherwise. And the degree in which they were destroyed was much greater. They were brought vastly lower; their images were all burnt; their temples forsaken; their oracles silenced; their altars neglected, &c. and their worship and dominion utterly abolished.

God honoured him as above the heathen Gods, in causing the image of Dagon to fall before him, and in breaking off his head and hands.

So God is represented in the prophecies of Isaiah, as gloriously manifesting himself, as above the Gods of the heathens, in appearing above Bel and Nebo, the idols of Babylon, when Babylon was destroyed, and the Jews delivered from their captivity there.

(6.) The vast extent to which Christ accomplished this effect, is to be considered. It was done through all the heathen countries that were known in the times of the Old Testament; through all the nations there mentioned, far and near, east, west, north and south; and not only so, but vastly beyond the utmost limits of the then known world, or of all those parts of the habitable world that are any where mentioned in any of those ancient writings. Nebuchadnezzar overrun the greater part of the nations that were then known. But the Babylonish empire was but a small thing in comparison with the Roman empire, which Christ converted from heathenism. And it is to be considered, that the Mahometans derive all the notions they have of the true God originally from Jesus Christ. It is to be considered, also, that America is now, in effect, in the possession of those that own the name of Jesus, and was taken from the heathen. By this vast extent of Christ's influence, not only all the heathen gods, all those kinds of idolatry which are mentioned in any part of the Old Testament are abolished, but innumerable other kinds of idols and idolatry.

(7.) Jesus overthrew heathenism, not only in so vast an extent, but at a time when it was in the greatest

est strength at which it had ever arrived, from the foundation of the world to that time, yea, or ever since that time. He overthrew it in its strongest empire, when it had the greatest earthly powers, authority, riches, and wisdom on its side, that ever it had. He overthrew it in that kingdom which the scripture says was strong as iron, and that broke in pieces and subdued all things; as iron is made use of to cut and break and subdue all things. He conquered the God of this world in his greatest glory and magnificence, when he was most secure, most ready to say, "*I sit a king for ever.*"

And as heathenism, at that time, enjoyed the greatest strength and advantage to maintain itself; so, it exerted all that power and strength which it had obtained, in opposition to Jesus, to endeavour to hinder this great effect we are speaking of. But all was in vain. Jesus overcame heathenism in all this its strongest opposition.

(8.) Our Jesus not only wrought this work to so great a degree and extent, and against the greatest opposition to him that ever had been exerted; but he wrought the work effectually and durably. Though, indeed, other bad things have arisen since, yet that ancient idolatry remains abolished to this day.

As long a time has now passed since Constantine the Great, as that which passed from the time of Moses to Christ.

(9.) This effect wrought by our Jesus, is vastly the greatest and best revolution that ever was brought to pass in the world. It is vastly the greatest revolution that ever was; the most like creating the world anew. And it was the best, the most happy revolution, consisting in abolishing things that were worst, most absurd, most debasing to mankind, and most pernicious and most hateful to God; and introducing, instead thereof, that light and knowledge, and those laws, and constitutions, and regulations, and means, that were most noble, excellent, worthy, and tending to the dignity, perfection, and happiness of men, and the honour of God.

(10.)

(10.) This was a work wherein God put peculiar honour upon our Jesus, vastly distinguishing him from, and exalting him above all the rest of mankind, even the greatest and best, and those who, in other respects, had been most favoured and honoured of God.

All the wise men among the heathens, that had some notion of the true God, and the vanity of idols, though there had been a succession of great philosophers, who arrived at great attainments in the knowledge of the nature of things in many respects, and philosophic knowledge had been increasing in the world for five or six hundred years; yet all with united exertions availed nothing for the production of any such effect; but, after all, the world grew worse and worse in their idolatries.

God, in this, conferred an infinitely greater honour upon Jesus, than ever he had done on any of his own people; than upon any of the most eminent saints that ever had existed from the foundation of the world. He did that which none of his prophets could do. Daniel was a great prophet; was remarkably and openly honoured of God, as his most peculiar favourite; and seemed to enjoy advantages for the accomplishing of an effect of this kind, in many respects beyond any other of the prophets. He dwelt for about 70 years in Babylon, in the head and heart of the heathen world; was a person very publicly known there; had acquaintance with the greatest men in the world; was exceedingly famed among them for his wisdom; was openly honoured of God in their view, by a most miraculous intercourse with heaven; and not only so, but was set in a place of high authority and power, in two of the great monarchies of the world successively, that of the Chaldeans, and that of the Medes and Persians; and he exhibited many clear demonstrations of the vanity of their idols, and of the glory of the true God, as infinitely above them. But no such effect followed, nor any thing like it.

David

David was a man highly favoured of God ; often declared to be a man after God's own heart ; was a zealous hater and opposer of the idolatry of the Heathens ; had his heart set much on the setting up the kingdom of the true God through the world, and on his being worshipped and praised by all nations, as appears abundantly by his psalms ; and had the advantage of great earthly power and authority. He was both a prophet and king ; and God made him the greatest prince that ever was in his day in the world ; subdued most of the Heathen nations in that part of the world to him, and brought them under his dominion. But yet he was made the instrument of no such revolution as this.

Solomon, his son, was yet a much greater prince, in wisdom, magnificence, great authority, great fame, and extensive influence in the world ; in wisdom and wealth exceeding all princes that ever were on earth ; and all nations used to come to him for instruction : and he did great things for the honour of the true God, that all the nations of the earth might hear his fame, and might be induced to worship him ; as appears by his prayer, 1 Kings, chap. viii. But God never honoured him, by making him the instrument of any such great revolution as that which we are speaking of, accomplished by Jesus Christ. He was not so much as the instrument of the conversion of those nations that were under his own dominion, or within his empire ; nay, even of one Heathen nation. Whereas, Jesus produced this through more than twenty times the extent of Solomon's empire.

It was a great work of the ancient judges, prophets, and kings of Israel, whom God raised up, and most distinguishingly favoured, to be the instruments to bring to pass the reformation of that one nation of Israel, when they had corrupted themselves with idolatry for 40 or 50 years. This was the highest honour of the ancient judges ; this was the glory of those excellent princes so highly favoured of God, Hezekiah and Josiah. It was a great work of Moses

to

to recover the people of Israel, after they were corrupted with Egyptian idolatry; and was what he could not thoroughly accomplish. Elijah and Elisha, and all other prophets sent to the ten tribes, never could thoroughly reclaim them from their idolatrous corruptions. Those great prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, could not thoroughly purge the Jews from idolatry.

And as to converting the Heathen world from their idolatry, it was what the whole nation of the Jews could not do. Though they were, after the captivity, for four or five hundred years together, dispersed abroad over great part of the Heathen world; and not only the vulgar and illiterate, but multitudes of their scribes and doctors, and heads of their synagogues; yet they never were so successful, as to convert so much as the greater part of one country or city, in all that time, (excepting the Edomites that came and dwelt in the land of Israel); even although there was a great disposition in them to endeavour to make proselytes: "They compassed sea and land to make one proselyte."

It is spoken of as a great honour, that God in his providence put upon Joseph, that he was advanced to be an instructor of the Egyptians, and to teach the senators of Egypt wisdom. But how small was the effect! As to the knowledge of God, which the Scriptures of the Old Testament often speak of as the highest part of wisdom, there was no great abiding alteration: But the Egyptians, in the generations immediately following, were sunk into vastly greater degrees of Heathenish darkness than ever; and not only so, but they drew the Israelites, Joseph's own people, into corruption with them.

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, were separated from the rest of the world, because of their idolatry; that the knowledge and worship of the true God might be kept up in the world. But they were not made the instruments of reclaiming any people from idolatry, or of preventing the inhabitants of the land where they

they dwelt, from sinking apace into the grossest and most impious idolatrous principles and practices.

(11.) Jesus converted those parts of the world that it was foretold the Messiah should convert; as, that he should convert the chief nations of the world for power, arts, wealth, merchandize, and seafaring. (See Fulfilment of Prophecies of the Messiah, p. 123, § 154). And those parts of the world that had belonged to the four monarchies; especially the last of them, viz. the Roman monarchy. (Ibid. p. 124, § 155). And particularly the inhabitants of Lesser Asia, and Europe. (Ibid. p. 125, § 157, 158). And that he should convert Egypt, many parts of Arabia, Philistia, Tyre, Babylonia, Tubal, Tarshish, Javan, the ends of the earth, and the isles in the sea, those that are far off upon the sea; as is remarkably fulfilled in the conversion of the utmost parts of Europe, and of those great islands, Great Britain and Ireland, and of America. And many other circumstances might be mentioned, which are exactly fulfilled in what Jesus has done: (as is observed in Fulfilment of Prophecies of the Messiah.)

(12.) Let it be considered, how unreasonable it is to suppose, that after this great effect had been so abundantly insisted on as the peculiar and most distinguishing honour of the Messiah, God should suffer it to be anticipated by another, a grand impostor, one most wickedly pretending himself to be the Messiah, (such as the Jews most blasphemously suppose our Jesus to be); that he would so favour him in his imposture, as to give him the honour of conquering the Heathen world, in its greatest monarchy, in its highest advancement, strength, and authority, &c.; producing this effect, foretold as the prerogative of the Messiah, in such vast extent, to so great a degree, and in so durable a manner, and in so many respects, in such places, and with respect to such subjects, and in such a manner, as was foretold of the true Messiah: and all not only agreeably to God's frequent and abundant predictions in the Old Testament,

Testament, but also agreeably to the predictions of this very impostor, declaring that he was the Messiah, and that, as such, he would accomplish this effect.

(13.) It may further be considered, that this effect has been so accomplished already, that it cannot now be accomplished by another Messiah, according to the prophecies. The prophecies are already fulfilled, and do not remain to be fulfilled by another. Jesus has abolished Heathenish idolatry in all the nations round about Canaan, and in every Heathen nation at any time mentioned in the Old Testament; and it does not now remain to be accomplished in any one of them: Neither in those isles mentioned in the prophecies; in the countries that had been subject to the four monarchies; nor in the fourth and greatest monarchy, the Roman empire.

(14.) If this revolution, which is vastly the greatest that ever was accomplished in the world of mankind, be not that which is so often foretold as what the Messiah should accomplish; then it is not foretold at all: which would be very strange. Strange indeed! that there should nowhere be any hint of an event, more considerable than any others that ever were predicted in any prophecy concerning any change or revolution in any nation or nations; a revolution, that was of such a nature as would have been most likely to be foretold, being of a religious nature, and so most nearly concerning the kingdom and city of God.

98. Concerning the objections against the reality of Christ's Resurrection, that he was not immediately known; that his body was not always visible, often vanished out of sight, &c.

I observe, that Christ's body rose as much the same body that it was before, as was consistent with that state which it was requisite his risen body should be in.

It was no wonder the form of it was considerably changed, when it rose not in its former infirmity, but was raised in power, and to immortality, and to impassibility.

No wonder it was not always visible, and the constant object of men's external senses; for if it had been so, it would have remained still in some connection with this wicked world of mankind; still connected with the society of the polluted, depraved inhabitants of the earth; and so, still within their reach in some respects; as it was within the reach of their malignity and reproach, and the exercise of their enmity in other respects.

It was necessary that his risen body should not be connected universally with this earthly, changeable, corruptible world, as is the case with respect to bodies which belong to this mortal state of existence. For, if so, his body must still remain liable to suffering and decay; would waste by perspiration; would need the constant repairs of food and sleep; would be liable to suffer injury by the weather, heat and cold, rains and dews; would be incommoded by darkness, &c. But this was not proper; for his body did not now belong to this world, as it did before; but was an heavenly body, though the change of it might not be so perfected, as to fit it for its heavenly state, till his ascension.

99. In what respect the propagation of Mahometanism is far from being worthy to be looked upon as parallel with the propagation of Christianity, will appear by these observations.

(1.) The revolution that was brought to pass in the world, by the propagation of Mahometanism, was not so great a revolution as that which happened by the propagation of Christianity; yea, in this respect, was by no means worthy to be compared to it. Consider the state the world was in before Christianity was propagated; how dark, ignorant, barbarous, and wicked:

wicked; how strongly these things were established by long universal immemorial custom; how fixed in mens hearts; how established by all human authority, and power, and inclination; and how vast the alteration, when Christianity was introduced and established; how vast the overthrow of that which had been built up before, and stood from age to age; how great, how strong the building; how absolute its destruction; and also, how great the building that was erected in its room; and of how different and opposite a nature from that which had stood on the same ground before.

But as to the revolution brought to pass in the world by Mahometanism, it consisted either in the change made among the heathen, barbarous nations, which had their original from Arabia or Scythia; or that made among professing Christians. But, with respect to neither of these, was the revolution comparably so great as the other. As to the change made among those Heathens, they long had entertained some obscure notions of the true God; and many of the great truths of what is called natural religion, they had obtained by those glimmerings of the light of the gospel which had been diffused over great part of the world; even that part of it that had not fully embraced Christianity. But Mahometanism carried them very little farther in these things; and was an occasion of but small advance of light and knowledge. As to the change made among Christians, there was no advance at all made in knowledge, or in any thing that was good. And as to the change made among them as to religious customs, they had so degenerated before, and were become so superstitious, that the alteration was not very perceptible.

(2.) The difference of the two revolutions was, as it were, infinitely great, as to goodness. The change made in the world by the propagation of Christianity, was a great change indeed, with regard to light

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and knowledge. It was a change from great darkness to glorious and marvellous light.

By the preaching of the gospel in the world, the day-spring from on high visited the earth, and the sun arose after a long night of the grossest darkness.

But as to the change made in Christendom by the propagation of Mahometanism, there was no increase of light by it, but, on the contrary, it was evidently a change from light to darkness: It was a propagation of ignorance, and not of knowledge. As to the change made among the Heathens, as we observed before, there was but a small degree of increase of light; and all the light that was added, was borrowed from Christianity. Any increase of knowledge that arose, proceeded only from Mahomet and his followers communicating what had before been communicated to them by Christian teaching. There can be no pretence of the least degree of addition in any thing, beyond what they had before received from the gospel. And as to rules and precepts, examples, promises, or incitements to virtue of any kind, no addition at all was made. What alteration there existed, was only for the worse; the examples, histories, representations, and promises of the new Mahometan religion, only tending exceedingly to debase, debauch, and corrupt the minds of such as received it.

(3.) The revolution that was occasioned by the propagation of Christianity, was an infinitely greater and more wonderful effect, if we consider the opposition that was overcome in bringing it to pass. Christianity was propagated against all the opposition that could be made by man's carnal dispositions, strengthened by inveterate general custom, principles, habits, and practice, prevailing like a mighty flood. Mahometanism was propagated, not in opposition to these inclinations, but by complying with them, and gratifying them, in examples, precepts, and promises, as Stapferus observes. Theol. Polem. tom. iii. p. 292.
speaking.

speaking of Mahomet's laws, he says, "The law which he published, was, above all others, accommodated not only to the opinions of men, but also to the depraved nature, manners, and innate vices of those nations, among whom he propagated it; nor did it require much more than external exercises, which, to a carnal man, are much more easy to be performed, than those spiritual exercises which the sacred pages prescribe. He allowed of revenge for injuries; of discarding of wives for the slightest causes; of the addition of wives to wives, which must have served only as so many new provocatives to lust. At the same time, he indulged himself in the greatest excess of promiscuous and base lasciviousness. He placed the true worship of God in such external ceremonies, as have no tendency to promote true piety. In fine, the whole of that religion which he instituted, was adapted to no other end, than the shedding of human blood."

This religion, in particular, is adapted to the luxurious and sensual disposition. Christianity was extremely contrary to the most established and darling notions of the world: whereas, Mahomet accommodated his doctrines to all such notions as were most pleasing at that time, among the Heathen, Arabians, Jews, and the several most prevailing sects of Christians; as Stapferus observes in the place last referred to.

"Mahomet retained many of the opinions of the ancient Arabians; he mixed his doctrine with the fables of the Jews, and retained many of the ceremonies of the other religions prevalent at that time. The religion of Mahomet favoured the prejudices of the Jews and of the Heathens; and was suited to the desires of the flesh, and to the allurements of the world. But the religion which Christ taught, did not, in the least instance, favour the depraved affections of men, and the indulgence of the flesh; but was diametrically opposed to them: nor was it suited to the prejudices of

“ either Jews or Gentiles ; but it was plainly contrary to the preconceived opinions of men. Whence the apostles, in preaching this religion, immediately opposed both the religion of the Jews and of the Gentiles.” Ibid. 340.

Christianity was propagated under the most violent, universal, and cruel persecution of all the powers of the world. Mahometanism was not so ; it never made its way any where, in any remarkable degree, against persecution.

(4.) The difference will appear great, if we consider the time when each of these were propagated. Christianity was propagated at a time when human learning and science was at its greatest height in the world. But Mahometanism was broached and propagated in ages of great darkness, after learning had exceedingly decayed, and was almost extinguished in the world.

(5.) The difference will farther appear, if we consider the places from whence these religions were propagated. Christianity was first begun in a place of great light, the greatest light with regard to religious knowledge then known, and in a very public part of the globe ; whither resorted innumerable multitudes of people three times every year, from almost all parts of the then known world. And beside the vast resort of Jews and profelytes thither, it was a country that was at that time under the inspection and government of the Romans, where they had a governor, and other public officers, constantly residing. It was propagated especially from Jerusalem, the chief city in that country, and one of the greatest and most public cities in the world ; and, indeed, all things considered, was next to Rome itself, above all others, a city set upon a hill ; nay, in some respects, even far beyond Rome. And the nations, among whom it was first propagated after the Jews, were not the more ignorant and barbarous nations, but the most knowing and learned in the world : as particularly the Greeks and Romans. And the cities where it was very
early

early received, and from whence it was promulgated to other parts, were the greatest, most public, and polite; such as Antioch, Ephesus, Alexandria, Corinth, Athens, and Rome: And some of these were the greatest seats of learning and philosophy on earth. Whereas, Mahometanism was broached in a dark corner of the earth, in Arabia; and the people among whom it first gained strength, who sent out armies to propagate it to the rest of the world, were an ignorant and barbarous sort of people; such as the Saracens and Turks, who originated from Scythia.

(6.) The difference appears in the means and method of propagation. Christianity was propagated by light, instruction and knowledge, reasoning and inquiry. These things were encouraged by the gospel; and by these means the gospel prevailed. But Mahometanism was not propagated by light and instruction, but by darkness; not by encouraging reasoning and search, but by discouraging knowledge and learning; by shutting out those things, and forbidding inquiry; and so, in short, by hoodwinking mankind, and blinding their eyes.

It was propagated by the power of the sword also; by potent sultans, absolute tyrants, and mighty armies. Christianity was propagated by the weakest of men, unarmed with any thing but meekness, humility, love, miracles, clear evidence, most virtuous, holy, and amiable example, and the power and favour of eminent virtue, joined with assured belief of the truth, with self-denial and suffering for truth and holiness. By such weapons as these was it propagated against the power, authority, wealth, and armour of the world: against the greatest potentates, most absolute and cruel tyrants, their most crafty counsels, and greatest strength, utmost rage and cruelty, and determined resolutions to put a stop to it, and extirpate it. It was propagated against all the strength of the strongest empire that ever was in the world.

(7.) One principal way wherein the propagation of Christianity is a proof of its truth, consists in its being

an evidence of the facts that are the foundation of it. Christianity is built on certain great and wonderful visible facts; such as, Christ's resurrection from the dead, and the great and innumerable miracles wrought by him and his apostles, and other followers, in Judea, and many parts of the world. These facts were always referred to, as the foundation of the whole; and Christianity always pretended to be built on them. That Christianity, which, in effect, is no other than the belief of these facts, should be extensively propagated in, and near the places and time when the facts were said to be wrought; when and where there was so much opportunity and advantage to know the truth of the matter; is a great, standing, everlasting evidence of the truth of the facts. But as to Mahometanism, it pretends to no facts for the proof and foundation of it, but only Mahomet's pretences to intercourse with heaven, and his success in rapine, murder, and violence. Belief of sensible miracles, or public attestations of heaven to Mahomet's authority and doctrines, was no part of his religion; and was not propagated, in propagating Mahometanism.

(8.) If we consider the propagation of Christianity in the view last mentioned, viz. as a doctrine or belief of wonderful divine facts; so, Mahometanism is not set up in opposition to it, or in competition with it: because the Mahometan religion itself owns the principal facts of Christianity, though it has no facts of its own to pretend to. And so Mahometanism rather confirms than weakens Christianity; and the propagation of Mahometanism itself, may be considered as one thing belonging to the propagation of Christianity, and as a part of that propagation, in as far as it consists in a propagation of a professed belief of those facts. It is so far an instance of the propagation of that which is the foundation of Christianity, that it proves all the rest. The Alcoran owns Jesus to be a great prophet; "the messenger of God," Surat. v. 84.; that he wrought miracles, healing a man blind from

from his birth, and the leprous, Surat. v. 119.; also raising the dead: And that Jesus as born of Mary himself was a miracle, Sur. xxiii. 52. He often speaks of Jesus as the servant and messenger of God; as Surat. iv. 158. iii. 152. iv. 169, 170. v. 84. Now, owning this, is in effect owning the whole. This is the foundation of the whole, and proves all the rest. It owns that Jesus was miraculously conceived and born; Surat. iii. 47., xix. 20, 21., and without sin. Surat. iii. 36., xix. 19. Mahomet owns Jesus, and ascribes the conception of Christ alone to the power of God, and the inflation of his Spirit. In Surat. xxi. 19. are these words, as the words of God: "And Mary was a chaste virgin, and We inspired her with Our Spirit, and set up her and her son as a miracle to all ages." He owned Jesus to be the Messiah foretold in the law and the prophets; Surat. iii. 45. "When the angels said, O Mary, certainly God declares to thee his own word; his name shall be Jesus Christ, the son of Mary:" Surat. xix. 29. Surat. iv. "Certainly Christ Jesus, the son of Mary, is the ambassador of God and his word." He owned Christ's ascension into heaven. "God raised him (Christ) to himself;" Surat. iv. 157. Concerning Christ's miracles Mahomet says, Surat. iii. 45., v. 119.; "God says, O Jesus, the son of Mary, I have strengthened thee by the Spirit of holiness; and thou shalt, by my leave, heal a man blind from his birth; and by my leave thou shalt raise the dead from their graves."

(9.) In this respect the great propagation of the Mahometan religion is a confirmation of revealed religion, and so of the Christian in particular, which alone can have any pretext to be a religion revealed by God; viz. as this is a great demonstration of the extreme darkness, blindness, weakness, childishness, folly and madness of mankind in matters of religion, and shows how greatly they stand in need of a divine guide, and divine grace and strength for their help, such as the gospel reveals. And that this gross delusion

lusion has continued so long to so great an extent, shows how helpless mankind are, under ignorance and delusion in matters of religion; and what absolute need they have of extraordinary divine interposition for their relief. And besides, such a miserable, blind, helpless state of mankind, is also exactly agreeable to the representation made in the Christian revelation.

100. The Jewish nation have, from their very beginning, been a remarkable standing evidence of the truth of revealed religion. They have been so in two respects:

(1.) In being so distinguished from all the world in their religion, and having preserved it in so great distinction. When every other nation under heaven had forsaken the True God, and was overwhelmed in Heathenish darkness, they had among them the knowledge and worship of the True God, and rational and true notions of his being, attributes and works; of his relation to mankind, and our dependence upon him, the worship and regards due to him, &c. which was upheld among them, and them alone, for so many ages, to the coming of Christ; where they were so surrounded every where, on every side, with nations so vastly differing from them, being some of the greatest Pagans and worst of idolaters.

The following things render this remarkable. 1st, That the whole world beside themselves had forgotten the True God, and forsaken his worship, and were all the while involved in gross heathenism. 2^d, That they lived in the midst of the most frequented and most populous parts of the world. 3^d, They did not live separated from the rest of the world by the sea, being an island or a peninsula; nor yet divided from others by vast desarts, or impassable mountains; but on the continent, in the midst of the habitable world, with populous countries adjoining to them almost on every side. 4th, That those nations, who were their

their next neighbours on every side, were steadfastly gross Pagans, and some of the most barbarous idolators.

5th, They were not a nation that studied philosophy; they had no schools among them under the care of philosophers, who instructed their pupils in human science; yet they had most apparently far better, more sublime, and purer notions of God and religion, of man's duty, and of divine things in general, than the best of the Heathen philosophers.

6th, They seem to have been a people no way remarkably distinguished from other nations, by their genius and natural abilities.

7th, They were a comparatively small people, not a great empire, not a vast and potent monarchy or commonwealth.

8th, Such changes and revolutions frequently came to pass in their nation, and such was their peculiar state from time to time, that they were exceedingly liable to be corrupted and overrun with Heathenish notions, and the customs of idolatrous nations, and to grow into a conformity to the rest of the world in that respect. They were above two hundred years in Egypt, which may be looked upon as the second nation, if not the first, for being the fountain of idolatry. And they lived there under circumstances tending the most to their being corrupted with idolatry, and brought to a conformity with the Egyptians in that respect, of any that can be imagined; especially on these accounts:—They were there in the beginning and rise of their nation. There the nation had its birth. It grew from one family of about seventy persons, with the father of the whole family at the head of it, to be more than a million of people, yea probably (reckoning male and female) about two millions.

They lived there, not separate and distinct from the Egyptians; but had continual intercourse with them.

They

They dwelt there as inferiors, in subjection to the Egyptians; their slaves: and the Egyptians that had daily concern with them, were their masters.

After they came into the land of Canaan, they for several ages dwelt there with the remains of the ancient Heathen inhabitants, that were so numerous and strong, as sometimes to overcome, and keep them long in subjection: which also, from time to time, their idolatrous neighbours did.

And after they had lived long in the land, ten of their tribes were carried away into final captivity, and Heathen inhabitants planted in their stead: by which the religion of the remaining two tribes was the more exposed.

At last, these remaining two tribes, with the Levites, and all that were left of the ten tribes who had mixed with them, were carried away into Babylon, the chief city of Chaldaea, the country that, above all in the world, (at least excepting Egypt), was the fountain of idolatry: there they dwelt during the time of one generation. So that before any of them returned, the body of the people were a new generation, born and brought up in that land of darkness, amongst idolators, that were their superiors and masters, and most of them the most honourable men that were then in the world; and a great part, perhaps the greater part of the nation, never returned, but continued dispersed in Heathen countries till Christ's coming.

As to the nation in general, those in Canaan, and those out of it, were in subjection to the three successive Heathen monarchies that arose, the Persian, Grecian, and Roman; and Heathen people belonging to each of those empires, often swarmed in their country.

9th, The people seemed to be, from their very beginning till the Babylonish captivity, exceedingly prone to idolatry; were fond, in that respect, of the customs of those Heathen neighbours, and were apt
to

to think it honourable to be like the rest of the nations, and a disgrace to be singular. This appears in that,

10th, They actually oftentimes apostatized to idolatry, embraced the worship of the Heathen gods, and neglected the worship of the True God; and continued sometimes for a long time in their conformity to their Heathen neighbours. Yet they were wonderfully reclaimed from time to time; so that they were never suffered finally to apostatize, as all other nations in the world had done, nor were left in their apostasy for so long a space of time.

11th, All is the more remarkable, in that not only the true God and his spiritual worship are so infinitely diverse from the gods and religion of the Heathens; but the external institutions and rites of worship observed among the Jews, and the law of their worship and religion, were remarkably diverse and repugnant to the religious rites of their Heathen neighbours. They were exceedingly opposite to the rites of the Egyptians, among whom they lived so long in their first beginning, and among whom they first became a nation. So were they also to the rites of the ancient inhabitants of Canaan, of the Philistines, Moabites, Ammonites, &c.

(2.) The other respect wherein the Jews may be considered as a remarkable evidence of the truth of revealed religion, consists in their being preserved so long a time a distinct nation from all others, even since their father Jacob's time, till this day; being neither destroyed nor abolished, nor lost, by mixing with other nations.

Jacob himself was exposed to be destroyed by his brother Esau, before he was married. His family were greatly exposed to destruction, at least as to any permanent distinction from other people, when Laban pursued after him, with a design probably to kill him, and to bring back his wives and children into Padan-Aram, and to keep them there; or, at least, by some means to carry back his family, and to prevent their ever going to Canaan.

He and his family were in imminent danger of being destroyed, when Esau came out against him with four hundred men.

His family were greatly exposed to be destroyed by the inhabitants of Canaan, when provoked by his sons destroying the Shechemites.

A series of wonderful and miraculous providences respecting Joseph, were the means of preserving the family, without which they would probably either have perished by the famine, or, in the time of that famine, have wandered away from Canaan, in such obscurity, and under such disadvantages, that they would likely have never returned any more to Canaan; and so the family would have been broken up.

In Egypt they were greatly exposed to be destroyed, when Pharaoh set himself to effect their destruction by drowning all the males.

When they had continued so long in Egypt, under such abject circumstances; it could be owing to nothing but a series of the greatest miracles, that ever they were separated from that people and land, so as to return again to dwell by themselves, to be kept a distinct nation.

They were in imminent danger of being swallowed up by Pharaoh and his host at the Red Sea; or of receiving such a blow, as wholly to break up the design of their proceeding to Canaan, to live there.

They were exposed to suffer that which would have prevented their proceeding, when the Amalekites met them, and fought with them.

Nothing but a course of most astonishing miracles for forty years could have prevented their perishing in the wilderness, or being obliged to go back again into Egypt, and suffering captivity, dispersion, and ruin by the nations that dwelt around that wilderness.

They were greatly exposed to be ruined as a people, by the opposition of the Moabites, Midianites, Amorites, and Og the king of Bashan.

That

That ever they got the possession of Canaan, which was then possessed by many nations greater and stronger than they, was owing to a course of great miracles, without the intervention of which they must have perished as a people.

After they had obtained the possession of the land, they were often greatly exposed to be utterly ruined in the time of the judges, when their enemies in those parts, who seemed to have an exceeding hatred of them, prevailed against them, and had the mastery of them. It could be owing to nothing but the special providence of God, that those enemies did not improve the advantages they had in their hands, utterly to destroy them, or at least to drive them, or carry them captive, out of that land; particularly the provoked Canaanites, before the deliverance by Deborah and Barak; the Midianites and the people of the East, before the deliverance by Gideon; and after them the Philistines.

Afterwards, in the time of the kings, there were many efforts of the enemies of Israel, utterly to destroy the whole nation, to cut them off from being a people, and to blot out their very name from under heaven, agreeably to Psalm lxxxiii. 3,—8. “ They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones. They have said, Come, let us cut them off from being a nation, that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance. For they have consulted together with one consent. They are confederate against Thee. The tabernacles of Edom and the Ishmaelites, of Moab and the Hagarenes, Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek, the Philistines with the inhabitants of Tyre: Assur also is joined with them; they have holpen the children of Lot.”

In David's time there was such a mighty combination of enemies against them, and so great a force was raised, that, one would think, might have been sufficient to swallow up the nation.

After Solomon's time, the nation was greatly weakened, and so much the more exposed to ruin, by their division into two kingdoms, often contending, and seldom in amity the one with the other.

The nation was greatly exposed in Rehoboam's time to be swallowed up by Shishak king of Egypt :

In Aſa's time, by the vast army of the Ethiopians :

And again, by the mighty army of the Moabites, Ammonites and Edomites, in Jehoshaphat's time, 2 Chron. xx.

And when the kings of Assyria overran and utterly destroyed the ten tribes, it was a wonder that the two tribes were spared.

The people were greatly exposed to be finally ruined by Sennacherib's army, who intended nothing else.

When the people were carried captive into Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar, and the whole land laid utterly waste ; it was a wonder, that this did not prove an entire end to them as a people. It was a wonder they were kept distinct in their captivity ; that then they were delivered ; and that after they had been in captivity so long, till those that had formerly lived in Canaan were generally dead, and a new generation born in Chaldea was risen up, they should be brought back, and again settled in their own land, and established as a people there. It was a wonder that the land was vacant for them ; and a wonder that they were not hindered in their design of resettling there, by the mighty opposition made to it by the Samaritans.

The people were marvellously preserved from being blotted out from under heaven, by Haman, in the time of Esther and Mordecai.

They were wonderfully preserved in Antiochus's time, who was earnestly set on their utter destruction as a people.

It may be observed in general, concerning them, during the time of the Old Testament, that there was no nation whatsoever, that the nations in general were

were at such enmity with, as the nation of the Jews; and they were, on this account, much more likely to be destroyed than any other nation.

They lived in a part of the world, where they were more exposed to be overrun by other nations, and so to be by them either trodden down, or torn away and scattered abroad in the earth, than had they dwelt in any other part; living as it were, in the midst of the earth, betwixt three great continents, Asia, Africa and Europe. Their land lay in the very road or thoroughfare between Asia and Africa; between Egypt and the great Eastern and Northern kingdoms, which for many ages were the greatest, most potent and active kingdoms in the world.

It seems the other nations thereabout were all destroyed from being a people, before Christ's time: as the Midianites, the Moabites, Ammonites, Amalekites, the seven nations of Canaan, and the Philistines.

It is remarkable concerning a great part of the time of the Old Testament, viz. from the Babylonish captivity till Christ, that a great part of the nation lived dispersed amongst other nations: And both those who were thus dispersed, and those that lived in their own land, were all that time in the power of the Heathen nations of the four monarchies.

With respect to the time since Christ, their preservation as a distinct nation, has, in many respects, been still more remarkable.

It was wonderful, that what happened to them in Titus's time, when the greater part of the nation was destroyed, and the rest dispersed all over the world in such wretched circumstances, did not prove their utter destruction as a people. And the calamities that happened to the remnant soon afterwards, made their continuance as a distinct people yet more surprising. For within half a century after their destruction by Titus, in the reign of Trajan and Hadrian, the nation in general every where rose in rebellion against the Romans; and were finally every

where beaten; so that in these wars the Jews had a thousand cities and fortresses destroyed, with the slaughter of about five hundred and eighty thousand men.

What are left of this people have ever since remained in a total dispersion over all the world, mixt every where with other people, without any thing like a government or civil community of their own, and often extremely harassed by other nations; though still they remain a clear and perfectly distinct nation from all other people.

101. There are these things which seem to shew that there was no creation before the Mosaic creation.

(1.) Those who suppose that there was a creation before the Mosaic creation, generally suppose the Mosaic creation to respect only this globe of the earth, and that the heavenly bodies in general were created before; concerning which I would observe,

1st, That this does not well agree with the account Moses gives of the fourth day's work of the creation, of which he gives an account.

The accounts we have of the creation of the heavenly bodies from time to time, particularly of the sun, moon and stars, here and elsewhere in the Old Testament, with reference to Moses's account, are so expressed, that it would be almost impossible to understand them any other way than as a proper making, creation and formation, and not merely of a scattering away of fogs and mists which hung over the face of the earth, so that they might have been seen here on the face of the earth, had there then existed any inhabitants to see them.

2^d, Nor does it well agree with his account of the creation of the light on the first day; for if the Mosaic creation was only of this earth, then we must suppose the sun was created before, and so the light would have existed before.

3^d, If any should suppose, that the Mosaic creation, though it extended beyond this earth, yet that it respect-
ed

ed only the solar system; I think there is no manner of reason to suppose any other, than that as the whole visible universe, the many suns or fixed stars that belong to it, are all one frame; so they were created together: not first one, and then two; or first ten, and then ten more; thus gradually increasing the number, till they came gradually to be so many millions. As if we find a stately building erected, it would be unreasonable to suppose any other, than that it was built together, and not first one stick of timber, and then after a long time another.

(2.) They who suppose there was any creation before the Mosaic creation, suppose the angels to have been created before. In opposition to which, I would observe,

1st, That place in Nehemiah, ix. 6. "Thou, even Thou, art Lord alone. Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host; the earth, and all things that are therein; the seas, and all that is therein: and Thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth Thee." Here I think it is most reasonable to suppose, that Nehemiah has reference to the very same creation that God speaks of in Exodus xx. 11. "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is." The descriptions are the same; the things spoken of as created are plainly the same. But the creation Nehemiah speaks of, includes the angels. They are included in the host of heaven that he mentions, as part of the creation of which he speaks; as is plain, by what he says further of the host of heaven at the end of the verse, "*And the host of heaven worshippeth Thee.*" The angels are evidently the host of heaven that worship God.

2^d, Christ's eternity is largely set forth, by his existing before the creation of this lower world, and all the parts of it; Prov. viii. 22,—30. "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were

were no depths, I was brought forth: when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth. While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depths." Which would not be proper and significant, if many created beings had existed long before these things, as well as he.

3d, God expresses his own eternity by this, that he was before *the day*; and that he then existed alone, existing before any other being that men erroneously worship as God. From whence we may conclude, that no created angels, who of old, and in most ages of the world, have been worshipped as gods, had any existence *before the day*; Isa. xliii. 10,—14. "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen, that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am He: before me there was no god formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am the Lord; and besides me there is no saviour. I have declared, and have saved, and I have shewed when there was no strange god among you; therefore ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God. Yea, *before the day was*, I am He, and there is none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall let it?"

From this place, it is probable, that the angels were created the first day with the light. See Pfaffii Theol. Dogm. et Mor. p. 190, 191.

102. "The question is asked, How shall we distinguish between the pretences to revelation, which are so many and various, all which have an equal right to be heard, that it is endless to look for religion in such a crowd of pretenders to it, and difficult to determine the merit of the several claims? So that the only fair way is to take up with natural religion, which is every where uniformly the same,
" and

“ and in which there is no danger of being deluded
 “ and misled by imposture ; for natural religion ad-
 “ mits of no counterfeit.

“ Now, to form a true judgement upon this case,
 “ it will be necessary, first to state the question right,
 “ upon the foot of this objection, and then to ex-
 “ amine what weight of reason there is in it.

“ First, then, the question must relate to revelati-
 “ on, considered only as a rule and measure of reli-
 “ gion. For the dispute betwixt nature and revela-
 “ tion, is confined to this one point, Which is the
 “ best and safest guide in religion ? It is absurd,
 “ therefore, to bring instances of any revelation in
 “ this case, which do not pretend to this property,
 “ that were never given, or pretended to be given,
 “ as a rule of religion. For, when men talk of the
 “ various revelations that have been in the world,
 “ and the difficulty of determining which they ought
 “ to obey, they cannot take into their consideration
 “ the answer of the oracle to Cræsus, or the several
 “ answers, on particular occasions, recorded in the
 “ Greek and Roman histories.

“ These are out of the present question, and have
 “ no relation to the inquiry concerning a rule or
 “ measure of religion.

“ On this view, there are not many revelations
 “ that come into competition. In the heathen world
 “ I know of none. For though there were sundry
 “ pretences to revelation, yet none was set up as a
 “ common standard for the religion of mankind.
 “ The religion of Rome was chiefly introduced by
 “ Numa, who pretended a revelation for the founda-
 “ tion of his authority : but it is plain he aimed at
 “ nothing farther than modelling the religion of his
 “ city, and had no thought of the rest of the world
 “ in what he did ; nor had the Romans any idea
 “ that their religion concerned any but themselves ;
 “ and therefore, when they extended their conquests,
 “ religion was their least concern. They left the
 “ world, in that respect, as they found it ; and men
 “ were

“ were not so much as invited to take their religion.
 “ Now, it is evident, no law, either human or di-
 “ vine, extends farther than the lawgiver intends.
 “ Suppose, then, if you please, Numa’s religion to
 “ be a revelation; yet, since it was given and declar-
 “ ed only to the people of Rome, the rest of the
 “ world can have no concern in it. That no system
 “ of religion in the heathen world claimed regard as
 “ a general law, is evident, from the answer return-
 “ ed by the oracle, when the inquiry was, Which re-
 “ ligion was the best? The answer was, That every
 “ man should worship according to the custom of
 “ the country where he was. So that all religions
 “ were esteemed equally good; and the most any re-
 “ ligion pretended to, was a local authority, which
 “ reached no farther than the laws of the country
 “ did. And unless men are for giving more to the
 “ pretended heathen revelations than ever they claim-
 “ ed for themselves, or was claimed for them by those
 “ who introduced them, and lived under them, they
 “ cannot be brought into this question; since they
 “ have no relation to us, any more than the many
 “ civil laws and constitutions of the same countries
 “ had. And men may as reasonably complain of the
 “ great variety of civil and municipal laws that dis-
 “ tract their obedience, and then instance in the laws
 “ of the Medes and Persians, as they now complain
 “ of the variety of revelations, instancing in such as,
 “ even were they true, concern them as little as the
 “ laws of Persia do.

“ But perhaps it will be said, that though these
 “ religions do not oblige us, yet nevertheless, if any
 “ of them were true, they effectually overthrow all
 “ others; for God cannot contradict himself, whe-
 “ ther he speaks to one nation or to all the world;
 “ and upon this foot these several pretences come
 “ within our inquiry. This reasoning may be good:
 “ But then, not one of all these pretended revelati-
 “ ons in the heathen world, within the period men-
 “ tioned, pretends to the essentials necessary to con-
 “ stitute

" stitute a law either human or divine. Where was
 " it published and declared? By whom, and how
 " qualified? Can you name the persons, and pro-
 " duce the gospel of such a religion? Take the in-
 " stance of Rome. What was Numa? A king, and
 " therefore submitted to in the innovations of reli-
 " gion: But, what one mark of a divine commission
 " can you produce? And yet, without such marks,
 " even a true revelation could be of no authority.
 " Try all other instances, and you will see how weak-
 " ly the objection against revelation is supported by
 " any pretences of the heathen world." Disc. preach-
 ed at the Temple church, p. 184, &c. *Thus far Dr*
Sherlock.

103. Also extracted from the same book of Dr Sherlock's, cited in the last number.

" The miracles reported to have been done in the
 " heathen world, are unworthy of God, considered
 " either in themselves, or the end proposed by them.
 " For, let it be observed, that God never works mi-
 " racles merely to astonish and surprise people, but
 " always to serve some great end of providence. And
 " though he has, in favour of his people, and some-
 " times even of particular persons, wrought a mi-
 " racle, yet, when he published the law and the gos-
 " pel, he did not rest the authority upon one or more
 " single miracles, but upon a long series of miracles
 " exhibited from day to day, for years together.
 " And if miracles are properly applied as a proof of
 " the purposes and will of God, miracles wrought
 " without being attended with any declaration of
 " God's will, in which we have any concern, are very
 " improper instances to be set up in opposition to those
 " of Moses and Christ, upon which the happiness
 " of mankind depends in this life, and in that which
 " is to come. This consideration gives weight and
 " authority to the miracles of the gospel: For it was
 " a design worthy of God to restore mankind to that
 " happiness which they had forfeited; and it was a
 " work,

“ work, in every view, of equal dignity and benevo-
 “ lence with the creation.

“ With what colour of reason can the pretended
 “ miracles of the heathen world be brought into this
 “ question, which were done upon trifling occasions,
 “ unworthy the interposition of God? Look into
 “ all the ancient oracles; see to what mean purposes
 “ they are applied, and how often they prove de-
 “ structive to those who relied on them: and then
 “ tell me what marks you see of divine wisdom, and
 “ goodness in them, that should set them upon an e-
 “ qual foot with the miracles of Christ Jesus.—

“ Shall I undertake to prove that it exceeds the pow-
 “ er of man to raise the dead, and give sight to the
 “ blind, and cure all diseases by the word of his
 “ mouth? No, never was any such attempt set up.

“ But must they, you will say, of necessity, pro-
 “ ceed from God, because they could not be wrought
 “ by men, especially considering that no effects, nei-
 “ ther the miracles of the gospel, nor the works of
 “ nature, can prove directly an infinite power or
 “ wisdom? For, who will be bold to say, that the
 “ wisdom and power of God were exhausted in the
 “ visible works of the creation, so that there is no-
 “ thing either wiser or greater, that infinite wisdom
 “ and power can contrive or execute?

“ Let this matter be rightly stated.—The first and
 “ most natural notion of God is, that he is the
 “ Maker of the world, and all things in it. This is
 “ the notion the Jews had of God: and when they
 “ distinguished the true God from the heathen gods,
 “ they defined him to be the Maker of the world and
 “ of mankind. Look, then, into the miracles of the
 “ gospel, and you will see this attribute of God as
 “ clearly demonstrated by them, as by the works of
 “ nature. For there you will find, that the author
 “ of the Christian miracles is the Maker of mankind.
 “ For by Him men were made; that is, dead bodies
 “ were made into living men: for, to raise a dead
 “ man, and to make a new man, are much the same
 “ thing.

“ thing. If we believe that we received our senses,
 “ our reason, our natural strength and vigour from
 “ the true God at first, look into the gospel, and you
 “ will find the miracles of Christ are from the same
 “ hand. For to the blind he gave sight; to the deaf,
 “ hearing; to the lame and sick, strength and sound-
 “ ness; to demoniacs and lunatics, he gave reason
 “ and a right mind. Or, if you choose rather to
 “ look into the material world for a proof of a God;
 “ if you think the beauty, order, and regularity of the
 “ world, speak God to be both the author and gover-
 “ nor of nature; search the gospel, and you will
 “ find the miracles of Christ derive themselves from
 “ the Governor of the world, and speak the same
 “ language with the works of nature. For at his
 “ word the stormy winds were laid; the sea obeyed
 “ his voice. When he suffered, all nature trembled;
 “ the earth shook; the veil of the temple was rent;
 “ the sun and the moon were darkened.

“ If you appeal to the natural sense and notions
 “ of mankind for the idea of the true God, and thence
 “ collect his essential attributes, justice, righteous-
 “ ness, holiness and goodness, let the voice of nature
 “ be still, and the gospel shall speak more plainly,
 “ how just, how righteous, how holy and good God
 “ is, who is the Author of the salvation and redemp-
 “ tion which is by Christ Jesus. Take what way you
 “ will to prove the being or the attributes of God;
 “ and in the same way, with equal advantage, you
 “ will prove the God of the world to be the Author
 “ of Christianity; which all who believe the being
 “ of a God are bound to admit as a proof of the
 “ truth of Christianity. And when our Saviour styl-
 “ ed the wonders that he performed, the works that
 “ the Father had given him to finish, he plainly ap-
 “ pealed to the power of the Creator, as manifested
 “ in the works that bare witness to him.

“ There is a question commonly asked upon this
 “ occasion, to which it may be proper to give an an-
 “ swer: That is, How shall we know that these mi-

“ racles did not proceed from an evil power, since
 “ we have instances, as some think, of miracles so
 “ wrought ?

“ The answer is, we know this the same way that
 “ any man knows the works of nature to proceed
 “ from a good being: For, how do you know the Crea-
 “ tor of the world was a good being? If you an-
 “ swer, That the Maker of mankind, the Author of
 “ nature, must of necessity be a good and holy Being,
 “ because he has woven into the nature of man the
 “ love of virtue, and hatred of vice;” (it might more
 properly have been said, a conscience approving vir-
 tue, and disapproving vice;) “ and given him di-
 “ stinct notions of good and evil: by which, reason
 “ unerringly concludes the author of this nature, and
 “ these principles, to be himself good and holy: I
 “ answer the same for the gospel of Christ. The
 “ love of virtue, and hatred of vice, is as inseparable
 “ from the gospel of Christ, as from the reason of
 “ man. And the gospel of Christ more distinctly
 “ teaches to know and acknowledge the holiness and
 “ goodness of God, than reason or the works of na-
 “ ture can do. And therefore, those who acknow-
 “ ledge the Author of nature to be a good Being,
 “ have much more reason to acknowledge the Author
 “ of the Christian miracles to be a good Being.

“ But then, we are told this is arguing in a circle,
 “ proving the doctrines first by miracles, and then
 “ the miracles again by the doctrines. But this
 “ is a great mistake, and it lies in this: Men do not
 “ distinguish between the doctrines we prove by mi-
 “ racles, and the doctrines by which we try miracles;
 “ for they are not the same doctrines.

“ The doctrines which are to be proved by mi-
 “ racles, are the new revealed doctrines of Christi-
 “ anity, which were neither known nor knowable to
 “ the reason of man. Such are the doctrines of sal-
 “ vation and redemption by Jesus Christ, of sanctifi-
 “ cation and regeneration by the Spirit of God. And
 “ who

“ who ever brought these doctrines to prove the
 “ truth or divine original of miracles ?”

104. If, in the times of Christ and his disciples, there had been any such magical art any where, either in Egypt or in other places, whereby those things related of Christ could be done ; such as, dumb men's being suddenly healed, the lame walking, sight given to the blind, &c. ; the emperors Tiberius, Nero, and others, who would not have spared any cost in inquiring after such things, would undoubtedly have found it out.

Pliny, book xxx. ch. 11: in his history of magic, says, concerning Nero, “ He had a greater desire after music and tragical singing.” And afterward, “ No man favoured any art with greater cost : For these things he wanted neither riches, abilities, nor disposition to learn.” Presently after, he relates how he was initiated into the magical suppers of king Tiridates. Grotius de verit. b. v. sect. 3.

105. God was very jealous for his own honour with respect to the miracles that were wrought by the prophets in his name : That his power should be acknowledged in the miracle, and all the glory ascribed to him, and none assumed by the instrument. Therefore, God was so provoked with Moses and Aaron, because they sanctified him not as they ought to have done, in bringing water out of the rock, that he refused, on this account, to suffer them to enter into the promised land, Numb. xx. 11, 12. Therefore, if Jesus had been an impostor, as the Jews charged him with being, John v. 17,—23., it is altogether incredible that God would have so countenanced, and in such a degree winked at Jesus's working miracles in his own name, and by his own power, claiming the power to work the same works that the Father wrought, and so making himself equal with God.

106. What was wrought with respect to Nebuchadnezzar, when he was driven from men, becoming like a wild beast, so that no man could confine or tame him; and afterwards, in restoring him to his right mind; is represented as a very great miracle, a divine work, remarkably demonstrating the infinite and uncontrollable power of God, and the supreme and most absolute dominion of Him whose work this was; and it was wrought for that end, as is manifest by Dan. iv. 2, 3. "I thought fit to shew the signs and wonders that the Most High hath wrought toward me. How great are his signs, and how mighty are his wonders! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation." Ver. 17. "This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones; to the intent that the living might know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will." To the like purpose, ver. 25, 26. Ver. 34, 35. "And at the end of the days, I Nebuchadnezzar lift up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me; and I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever and ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation. And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What dost thou?" Ver. 37. "Now, I Nebuchadnezzar praise, and extol, and honour the king of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgement; and those who walk in pride, he is able to abase."

But if this work wrought on Nebuchadnezzar was so great a miracle, so evidently divine, and so clearly demonstrating the divinity of the author of it, his infinite power and superior dominion; then, this is a clear proof, that the miracle Christ wrought on the
 poor

poor Gadarene, was a divine work, and a sufficient evidence of the divinity, and the infinite, supreme, and most absolute power of Jesus, who wrought it. He was no less wild and untameable than Nebuchadnezzar; Matt. viii. "He was exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way." Mark v. 3, 4, 5. "No man could bind him, no, not with chains; because that he had often been bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any man tame him. And always night and day he was in the mountains and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones." Luke viii. 27. "He wore no clothes, neither abode he in any house." This man Christ restored perfectly, and of his own power and authority. The devils that possessed him, by their behaviour appeared to be sensible that they were under his power. They spake to him as one that had power to expel them, to confine, punish, and torment them.

They fell down before him, as before the Son of God Most High, beseeching him not to torment them, and not to command them to go into the deep, but to suffer them to enter into the herd of swine. And Christ "commanded the devil, saying, Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit;" Mark v. 8. Luke viii. 29. But the man who had been possessed of the devils, was perfectly delivered, and sat at Jesus's feet, clothed, and in his right mind.

107. The curing the leprosy was a special manifestation of the power of God. The leprosy which appeared among the Jews, seems not to have been a disease that came by natural means, but a special plague sent by God, as was the leprosy of a garment, and of an house; and therefore, was not to be removed but by the same hand that sent it.

108. The unreasonableness of infidelity is well represented in the following paragraph:

2 1 3.

"What

" What can be more unworthy of a man, than
 " to be ignorant, and to be willing to be ignorant,
 " of what is the cause, what the order, and what
 " the end of this world, and by whose power it is
 " moved? What can be more base than for a man
 " willingly not to know who sent him into the
 " world; whence he came; whither he is going;
 " what conduct of his shall be followed with misery
 " or with happiness; what are the wages of misery
 " and of happiness; what are the remedies of evils;
 " what is to be hoped, and what is to be feared; and
 " in that manner to live in perpetual doubt, and per-
 " petual agitation, by hope and fear alternately succeed-
 " ing each other, so that the mind sometimes is precipi-
 " tately inclined this way, sometimes that way, and is
 " incapable of rest? Is it not the greatest madness for
 " a man to endeavour to strengthen his mind against
 " those things, to flee from himself, to choose a vo-
 " luntary banishment, and, being ignorant of his
 " own character, which is too well known to others,
 " to choose death? nay, to glory in doubting con-
 " cerning the immortality of the soul, and future
 " rewards and punishments, on the pretence that
 " he is not touched with either hope or fear, like the
 " credulous multitude? He is certainly miserable,
 " and, at the same time, the worst and most aban-
 " doned of men, who, against the remonstrances of
 " his conscience, is unwilling to acknowledge what,
 " whether willing or unwilling, he ought from ex-
 " perience to acknowledge, that he stands or falls at
 " the will of another." Roellius, as quoted by Stap-
 " ferus, Theol. Polem. tom. i. p. 512.

109. That Jesus Christ was no impostor, is well
 argued in the following passage: " What could the
 " most merciful Saviour have gained in this way, but
 " misery, punishment, and crucifixion? For all
 " worldly conveniences were far from him: nor did
 " he wish, like Mahomet, to establish an earthly
 " kingdom. Neither was his doctrine adapted to
 " the

“ the disposition of mankind ; nor were his precepts
 “ and institutions such, that he could expect to win
 “ by them the favour of men. Impostors are wont
 “ to accommodate themselves and their doctrine to
 “ the circumstances of time and place ; to indulge
 “ the manners and constitutions of men : they give
 “ way where they perceive too great opposition ; they
 “ do not directly oppose preconceived and deeply
 “ rooted opinions ; but they adapt themselves to them,
 “ they change some things, and add some things new,
 “ yet so that they retain the old ideas.

“ Christ plainly acted a very different part. His
 “ doctrine was directly opposite to the prejudices of
 “ the Jews. He insisted upon it, that all their ex-
 “ ternal form of worship, instituted by Moses, ac-
 “ cording to the command of God, was abolished ;
 “ a form of worship, which the greatest part of the
 “ Jews thought would continue to the end of the
 “ world, and on the observance of which they entire-
 “ ly depended for their salvation ; a form of worship
 “ different from that of other nations, and in which
 “ the Jews gloried ; a form of worship in the highest
 “ degree subserving the interest of the chief men a-
 “ mong the Jews, as it made the people dependent
 “ on them. This form of worship, Christ insisted,
 “ was become obsolete, and as such to be laid aside.
 “ If he was an impostor, attached to a sect, and
 “ sought many followers ; why did he not, in this
 “ instance, favour the opinions of the Jews, which
 “ were most deeply rooted ? Why did he insist
 “ on the abolition and removal of that, of which
 “ they were most fond, and in which they sought the
 “ highest glory ? Why did he not rather profess
 “ himself to be a restorer of the Jewish government
 “ and public worship ? He well knew what opinion
 “ the Jews entertained concerning the person and
 “ work of the Messiah. Why, then, since he wished
 “ to be received by them as the Messiah, did he not,
 “ if he were an impostor, accommodate himself, to
 “ the utmost of his ability, to their opinion in this
 “ particular ?

“ particular? Why did he, in all respects, exhibit
 “ himself directly the contrary to their opinion and
 “ expectation?

“ Whence came it to pass that he so sharply reprehended the vices of their chief men, and thereby incurred their hatred? Why did he do it so publicly? Why did he not rather court their favour?

“ Nor did his doctrine coincide with the wisdom of the Gentiles. Therefore, it was not only a stumbling-block to the Jews, but foolishness to the Greeks. Thus, he introduced a new doctrine, or, to speak more properly, a doctrine which plainly appeared to all people new. He retained nothing of the favourite principles of either Jews or Gentiles.

“ He gave not the least indulgence to the vices, to the carnal lust, to the ambition or other wickednesses most familiar to man in his present state of depravity: yet this indulgence was granted by all the impostors and false teachers of our Lord's time, and the times following. On the other hand, he enacted and published the most pure laws against all the allurements of the world. Whatever, says he, entices and incites to sin, is to be avoided and rejected, though it be more dear than an eye, and the other bodily members or organs. He not only forbids the overt actions of lust, but also lustful thoughts. He requires every member of the Christian church to lay aside every desire of revenge, and to exercise an universal love of even enemies. He condemns all hypocrisy in divine worship: nay, he makes the entrance into the kingdom of heaven, or the communion of his church, most difficult. Without doubt, it satisfies all impostors and false prophets, without one exception, that they have given to men the name of their sect and doctrine: but our Lord in the plainest terms asserts, that a mere profession of Christianity is useless. Nor is he contented with the mere assent to his doctrine; but demands the most exact observance
 “ of

“ of his law. “ Not every one, says he, who faith
 “ unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the king-
 “ dom of heaven, but he that doth the will of my
 “ Father who is in heaven.” Nay, he proposes the
 “ divine perfections as the most perfect pattern of
 “ our life, and demands of his disciples the most en-
 “ tire denial of themselves. He promised even to
 “ his apostles no worldly advantage; but declared,
 “ that hatred, stripes, persecutions, excommunica-
 “ tion from the Jewish church, and death, were to
 “ to be expected by the preachers of the gospel.
 “ Matt. x. “ Ye shall be hated of all men for my
 “ name’s sake: the time will come, when all that
 “ kill you shall think that they do God service.” So
 “ far from encouraging ambition in his followers, he
 “ declared, that unless they should be so changed as
 “ to become like little children, they should not en-
 “ ter into the kingdom of heaven.

“ All these are not only most remote from the cha-
 “ racters of an impostor and false prophet, but are
 “ diametrically opposite to them, as will be acknow-
 “ ledged by every reader who is uninfluenced by
 “ preconceived opinions.

“ Our Lord confirmed the truth of his testimony,
 “ by patiently enduring the most reproachful mock-
 “ ery, and the most grievous tortures unto death.
 “ Hence his disciples have imitated their Master in
 “ this particular.

“ The opposers of Christianity say, that all religi-
 “ ons, even those which are most inconsistent with
 “ each other, agree in this, that they boast of their
 “ martyrs; and that, therefore, it is not wonderful
 “ that the apostles and their master underwent mar-
 “ tyrdom to support their religion. But here we
 “ find a great difference. Others undergo death, be-
 “ cause the falsehood which they profess is believed
 “ by them to be a real truth. But if Christ and his
 “ apostles were impostors and seducers, they suffered
 “ death for that which they themselves knew to be
 “ most false: which is plainly without any appear-
 “ ance

“ance of probability.” Stapferi Theol. Polem. tom. ii. p. 1132, &c.

110. “Who can persuade himself, that men, most unlearned, distracted, or fanatical, could, with the greatest concord among themselves, have exhibited, and every where inculcated, both by their preaching and their writings, a doctrine which implies far more just and wise ideas concerning God, than those of all the philosophers who have hitherto lived : that they should have prescribed a mode of worship plainly rational : that they, contrary to the common opinions of men, should have taught that God is to be worshipped, not in mere external ceremonies, but in a spiritual manner ; and that the mind, no less than the body, is to be composed to the worship of the Supreme God : that they should have given such rules of living, as the most bitter enemies of revealed religion are forced to approve ? If these men had been fanatics or madmen, surely there would have been found some marks of it in their lives or in their writings. But, let any one peruse all the gospels and all the epistles, he will find nothing of this sort there, no footsteps of madness or fanaticism.

“It is also entirely incredible, that the greatest part of men should suffer themselves to be imposed upon and deceived by fools and madmen, in an affair which was plainly opposite to their opinions, and in a doctrine which favoured neither their temporal interest, nor their carnal gratification, but was manifestly contrary to all the attractive charms of the flesh. Yet this doctrine hath taken root most deeply and extensively ; and that not only for a short time, but for many ages, for almost two thousand years, hath been continually propagated, and hath been received at every period during that long time, by men of various descriptions ; not only by the credulous multitude, but by princes and great men ; not by the foolish and
“ simple

“ simple only, but by the wise, and even by the
 “ greatest philosophers ; by the learned equally as
 “ by the unlearned. Is it probable, that a system of
 “ new sentiments, invented and propagated by mad-
 “ men and fanatics, would have obtained so great
 “ credit through all this time ? The dreams of fana-
 “ tics soon perish. Perhaps they obtain applause
 “ with the ignorant ; while philosophers laugh at
 “ them. But the Christian doctrine is such, that it
 “ commends itself to the most wise and the most vir-
 “ tuous. Who then can say, that this is mere fa-
 “ naticism ? It was not propagated by force of
 “ arms, or by art and subtilty. It was protected by
 “ no human aid. Nor did the apostles preach the
 “ gospel chiefly in those places, in which the peo-
 “ ple were unlearned, ignorant, and unimproved by
 “ arts and sciences ; but at Jerusalem, in the cities
 “ of Greece, in which were the most acute philoso-
 “ phers ; and at Rome, the seat of all the sciences.
 “ They published their new doctrine to the world,
 “ improved by the sciences. The first evangelists
 “ did not seek darkness, but came forth into the
 “ light ; nor did they request of others, that they
 “ should believe their words without explanation,
 “ but chose that whatever they advanced should be
 “ examined.” 1 Thes. v. 21, 22. ; 1 John iv. 1.
 “ But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty,
 “ not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word
 “ of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the
 “ truth, commending ourselves to every man’s con-
 “ science in the sight of God ;” 2 Cor. iv. 2.—Stap-
 ferus, tom. ii. p. 1136, &c.

111. That the apostles were not impostors, who
 knew that the miracles of Christ and his resurrection,
 of which they testified, were mere fictions of their
 own, and told such falsehoods, to acquire glory as
 the heads of a party, &c. is well argued in the fol-
 lowing paragraphs :

“ If

“ If the apostles meant to deceive ; if they sought
 “ their own glory, why did they so ingenuously re-
 “ late their own faults ? Why did they secrete nei-
 “ ther their own slowness to believe, nor their con-
 “ tinual altercations, nor Peter’s denial of his Lord,
 “ nor the desertion of him by all the apostles ? If
 “ they related a mere fiction, why did they not write
 “ by agreement ? The books of the New Testament
 “ were not written by one man, but by many.
 “ These do not contradict themselves, or each other :
 “ yet they so write, that it easily appears, that they
 “ did not act from agreement. But how could it
 “ come to pass, if the whole affair was a mere fic-
 “ tion, that in all things they so wonderfully agree
 “ among themselves ?

“ The facts which the apostles relate, are not said
 “ to have taken place in distant countries, in remote
 “ times, among unknown men, but in the very place
 “ in which the apostles related and wrote them ; at
 “ that time in which all events were recorded in
 “ books ; among those men, among whom the a-
 “ postles preached and wrote, and who were under
 “ the best advantages to know whether those facts
 “ did really take place or not. They exhibit these
 “ facts not as unknown, but do, as it were, take for
 “ granted, the general knowledge of them, and de-
 “ clare those things which make the sum of the af-
 “ fair, in the face of the rulers of the Jews, their
 “ chief enemies. Impostors and inventors of fables
 “ are not wont to act thus, but carefully to conceal
 “ their fictions from detection.

“ If those things which they related to the town
 “ were false, whence did it come to pass, that they
 “ were not blamed on account of their most impu-
 “ dent and most audacious fraud. Why did not the
 “ sworn enemies of the Christian institution turn
 “ those state fables to their own advantage, and
 “ shew, that all things pretended by the apostles,
 “ were mere fictions, and that the certainty of those
 “ works had no foundation ? The Christian reli-
 “ gion

" gion could, in its beginning, have been extinguish-
 " ed by nothing more easily, than by demonstrating,
 " at that very time, that the history on which it de-
 " pended, was a falsehood. There was nothing by
 " which the minds of men could more effectually
 " have been called off from this religion, than clear
 " proof given by the magistrates and chief men of
 " the Jews, that the apostles were guilty of fraud,
 " and that the story which they told, was a fable and
 " an imposture. So great was the bitterness of these
 " magistrates toward Paul and the other apostles,
 " that they let slip no opportunity of reproaching
 " them; and they eagerly laid hold of every thing
 " which could be turned to the disadvantage of the
 " apostles, and of Christianity. But concerning the
 " truth of the miracles and of the resurrection of
 " Jesus Christ, there is every where a deep silence;
 " though the mere demonstration that these things
 " were fictitious, would have been sufficient for the
 " total subversion of the Christian religion. Why
 " then did not the Jewish magistrates and other ene-
 " mies of the Christians, exhibit, both in their de-
 " clarations and writings, clear and public proof of
 " the cheat, and thereby guard others from the de-
 " lusion?"

The words of that most acute divine, *Joh. Alph.*
Turretine, in his *Disc. concerning Miracles*, are well
 worthy to be considered in this place. They are as
 follows: " The apostles conducted themselves in
 " such a manner, that it is manifest that they fear-
 " ed nothing of the kind, and that they were fully
 " and perfectly secure concerning the truth of their
 " story. For they acted openly; they disguised no-
 " thing; they mentioned all circumstances, marked
 " the places and times of all events; they named the
 " persons, the priests, the magistrates, the private
 " men, and all those who bore any part in the facts:
 " they appealed to the witnesses then alive; and
 " Paul appealed to five hundred witnesses of the re-
 " surrection of our Lord. They boldly published

“ those facts before all, Jews, Gentiles, philoso-
 “ phers, kings and magistrates; they related them,
 “ they inculcated them, they defended them, on all
 “ occasions, and in all places. They were not afraid,
 “ they were not anxious, lest they should not be be-
 “ lieved. They told the most wonderful and stu-
 “ pendous events as simply and securely, as if no
 “ body could call them in question. No art, no
 “ caution, no reservation, no colouring is to be found
 “ in any of them.—In this manner did the apostles
 “ speak and act.—But who can imagine, that im-
 “ postors would act in this manner? Who can ima-
 “ gine, that unlearned men, ignorant mechanics,
 “ could so conceal all fraud, and so mimic the out-
 “ ward appearance of honest men, that not even the
 “ least sign of deception appears? *The word of truth*
 “ *is simple.* But where is there greater simplicity,
 “ greater candour, and more manifest signs of sin-
 “ cerity and truth, than in the manner in which the
 “ apostles relate the facts of the gospel?

“ No religion, no sect, had more enemies than
 “ Christianity; none had enemies more powerful or
 “ more learned. If there had been fictions and
 “ fables in the writings of the apostles, no doubt
 “ they would have detected them. If those most inve-
 “ terate enemies of Christianity had known any thing
 “ solid or certain against the accounts given by the
 “ apostles, most certainly they would not have kept
 “ it in silence. How does it come to pass, that in
 “ all the writings of the Jews, the frauds of Christ’s
 “ disciples are no where pointed out, and proved?
 “ Which profound silence, and the mere criminations,
 “ without support, they threw out against the a-
 “ postles, are a strong confirmation of the apostolical
 “ narrations.” *Stapferi Theol. Polem. tom. ii. p.*
 “ 1143, &c.

112. One evidence of the truth of the *facts* that
 were the ground of the Christian faith, is, that Christi-
 anity was propagated so far in all parts, so early, when
 there

there was so great and manifold opportunity to inquire into the truth of those facts, without a possibility of failing to make a discovery of their falsehood, if they had been false.

Pliny the younger, in the reign of the emperor Trajan, was governor of Bithynia, and his epistle to the emperor is extant, lib. x. epist. 97. ; in which he writes, " That the number of the Christians was incredible, so that the temples and altars were forsaken ; that he, upon examination, could not assert that they were guilty of any crime ; that they rendered divine worship to Jesus, and that with so great perseverance, that they would rather suffer even the most ignominious death, than, in the denial of Christ, to sacrifice to the gods. That the number of those who were exposed to the laws by a profession of the Christian religion was so great, that it included those of every age and rank ; that not only the cities, but the villages and country were infected with this plague," as he was pleased to call Christianity. From all which it most clearly appears, that the Christian religion, toward the close of the first century, was spread far and wide, *Stapferi Theol. Polem.* tom. ii. p. 1168, &c.

PART II.

OBSERVATIONS CONCERNING THE MYSTERIES OF SCRIPTURE.

1. If we seek for any thing in the dark by so low a faculty of discerning as the sense of feeling, or by the sense of seeing with a dim light, sometimes we cannot find it ; though it be there, it seems to us to be impossible that it should be there. But yet, when a clear light comes to shine into the place, and we discern by a better faculty, viz. of sight, or the

same faculty in a clearer manner, the thing appears very plain to us. So, doubtless, many truths will hereafter appear plain, when we come to look on them by the bright light of heaven, that now are involved in mystery and darkness.

2. How are we ready to trust to the determinations of a man, that is universally reputed a man of great genius, of vast penetration and insight into things, if he be positive in any thing that appears to us very mysterious, and is quite contrary to what we thought ourselves clear and certain in before? How are we ready in such a case to suspect ourselves; especially if it be a matter wherein he has been very much versed; has had much more occasion to look into it than we; and has been under greater advantages to know the truth? How much more still, if one should be positive in it, as a thing that he had clearly and undoubtedly seen to be true, if he were still of ten times greater genius, and of a more penetrating insight into things, than any that ever have appeared? And, in matters of fact, if some person whom we had long known, that was a person of great judgment and discretion, justice, integrity, and fidelity, and had always been universally so reputed by others, should declare to us, that he had seen and known that to be true which appeared to us very strange and mysterious, and concerning which we could not see how it was possible that it should be; how, in such a case, should we be ready almost to suspect our own faculties, and to give credit to such a testimony, in that which, if he had not positively asserted it, and persisted in it, we should have looked upon as perfectly incredible, and absurd to be supposed?

3. From that text, John iii. 12., "If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?" several things are manifest concerning mysteries in religion. (1.) That there are mysteries in religion, or that there are things

things contained in those doctrines that Christ came in- to the world to teach, which are not only so far above human comprehension, that men cannot easily apprehend all that is to be understood concerning them; but which are difficult to the understanding in that sense, that they are difficult to be received by the judgement or belief; "How shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?" difficult, upon the same account that the doctrine of the new birth was difficult to Nicodemus, because it was so strange, and seemingly impossible. (2.) We may from the words infer, that the more persons or beings are, in themselves, and in their own nature, above us; the more that the doctrines or truths concerning them are mysterious to us, above our comprehension, and difficult to our belief; the more do those things that are really true concerning them, contain seeming inconsistencies and impossibilities. For Christ, in the preceding verses, had been speaking of something that is true concerning man, being of the same nature, an inhabitant of the same world with ourselves; which, therefore, Christ calls an earthly thing. And this seemed very mysterious and impossible, and to contain great seeming inconsistencies. He says, "How can a man be born when he is old?" This seemed to be a contradiction. And after Christ had somewhat explained himself, still the doctrine seemed strange and impossible; v. 9. "How can these things be?" Nicodemus still looked upon it incredible, and, on that account, did not believe it at that time, as is implied in these words of Christ; "If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not." But Christ here plainly signifies, that he had other truths to teach that were not about man, an earthly inhabitant, but about a person vastly above man, even about himself, who is from heaven, and in heaven, as in the next verse: "And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven; even the Son of man which is in heaven." Which, therefore, it would be most reasonable to suppose, should be much

more difficult to mens understanding and judgement, seeming to contain greater impossibilities and inconsistencies; as he then proceeds immediately to declare to him an heavenly thing, as he calls it, viz. that Christ, an heavenly and divine person, should die; ver. 14, 15. Such a mysterious doctrine, so strange, and seemingly inconsistent and impossible, that a divine person should die, is more strange than that men should be born again. Hence, when divines argue, from the mysterious nature of many things here below with which we are daily conversant, that it would be very unreasonable to suppose but that there should be things concerning God which are much more mysterious; and that, therefore, it is unreasonable to object against the truth of the doctrines of the Trinity, Incarnation, &c.; they argue justly, because they argue as Christ argued.

4. The wiser heathens were sensible, that the things of the gods are so high above us, that no other is to be expected, than that what appertains to them should appear exceedingly mysterious and wonderful to us; and that it is therefore unreasonable to disbelieve what we are taught concerning them on that account. This is fully expressed by that great symbol of Pythagoras; viz. "*Concerning the gods, disbelieve nothing wonderful, nor yet concerning divine things.*" This, says Jamblicus, declareth the superlative excellency of God's instructing us, and puts us in mind, that we ought not to estimate the divine power by our own judgment. The Pythagoreans stretched this rule beyond the line of divine revelation, to the belief of every oriental tradition." Gale's Court of the Gentiles, p. 2. b. 2. c. 8. p. 190.

5. It is not necessary that persons should have clear ideas of the things that are the subject of a proposition, in order to their being rationally convinced of the truth of the proposition. There are many truths,
of

of which mathematicians are convinced by strict demonstration, concerning many kinds of quantities, as, furd quantities and fluxions; but concerning which they have no clear ideas.

6. Supposing that mankind in general were a species of far less capacity than they are; so much less, that, when men are come to full ripeness of judgement and capacity, they arrived no higher than that degree to which children generally arrive at seven years of age; and supposing a revelation to be made to mankind, in such a state and degree of capacity, of many such propositions in philosophy as are now looked upon as undoubted truths; and let us suppose, at the same time, the same degree of pride and self-confidence as there is now; what cavilling and objecting, &c. would there be!

Or, supposing a revelation of these philosophical truths had been made to mankind, with their present degree of natural capacity, in some ancient generation; suppose that which was in Joshua's time; in that degree of acquired knowledge and learning which the world had arrived at then, *how incredible* would those truths have seemed!

7. If things, which fact and experience make certain, such as the miseries infants sometimes are the subjects of in this world, &c. had been exhibited only in a revelation of things in an unseen state, they would be as much disputed as the Trinity and other mysteries revealed in the bible.

8. There is nothing impossible or absurd in the doctrine of the *Incarnation of Christ*. If God can join a body and a rational soul together, which are of natures so heterogeneous and opposite, that they cannot, of themselves, act one upon another; may he not be able to join two spirits together, which are of natures more similar? And, if so, he may, for aught we know to the contrary, join the soul or spirit of a man

to

to himself. Had reason been so clear in it, that a God cannot be incarnate, as many pretend, it could never have suffered such a notion to gain ground, and possess the minds of so many nations: nay, and of Julian himself, who says, that "Jupiter begat Esculapius out of his own proper substance, and sent him down to Epidaurus, to heal the distempers of mankind." Reason did not hinder Spinoza, Blount, and many other modern philosophers, from asserting, that God may have a body; or rather, that the universe, or the matter of the universe, is God. Many nations believed the incarnation of Jupiter himself. Reason, instead of being utterly averse to the notion of a divine incarnation, hath easily enough admitted that notion, and suffered it to pass, almost without contradiction, among the most philosophical nations of the world.

9. "In thinking of God's raising so many myriads of spirits, and such prodigious masses of matter out of nothing, we are lost and astonished, as much as in the contemplation of the Trinity. We can follow God but one or two steps in his lowest and plainest works, till all becomes mystery and matter of amazement to us. How, then, shall we comprehend Himself? How shall we understand His nature, or account for His actions? In that He contains what is infinitely more inconceivable than all the wonders of his creation put together." Deism revealed, edit. 2. vol. ii. p. 93, 94.

Those that deny the *Trinity*, because of the mysteriousness of it, and its seeming inconsistency, yet, generally own God's certain prescience of mens free actions, which they suppose to be free in such a sense, as not to be necessary. So that we may do, or may not do, that which God certainly foresees. "They also hold, that such a freedom without necessity, is necessary to morality; and that virtue and goodness consist in any one's doing good when he might do evil. And yet they suppose, that God acts by
" the

" the eternal law of nature and reason, and that it is
 " impossible that he should transgress that law, and do
 " evil; because that would be a contradiction to his
 " own nature, which is infinitely and unchangeably
 " virtuous. Now this seems a flat contradiction. To
 " say, that the infinite goodness of God's nature makes
 " it utterly impossible for God to do evil, is exactly the
 " same as to say, he is under a natural necessity not
 " to do evil. And to say, he is morally free, is to say,
 " he may do evil. Therefore the necessity and free-
 " dom in this case being both moral, the contradic-
 " tion is flat and plain; and amounts to this, that
 " God, in respect to good and evil actions, is both
 " a necessary and free agent. Dr Clark, in his
 " treatise on the Attributes, labours to get clear of
 " this contradiction upon these principles of liberty,
 " but without success; and leaves it just where all
 " men, who hold the same principles, must be forced
 " to leave it.

" Therefore, they hold such mysteries, in respect
 " to Deity, that are even harder to be conceived of,
 " or properly expressed and explained, than the
 " doctrine of the Trinity.

" When we talk of God, who is infinite and in-
 " comprehensible, it is natural to run into notions
 " and terms which it is impossible for us to recon-
 " cile. And in lower matters, that are more with-
 " in our knowledge and comprehension, we shall not
 " be able to keep ourselves clear of them. To say
 " that a curve line, setting out from a point within a
 " hair's breadth of a right line, shall run towards that
 " right line as swift as thought, and yet never be able
 " to touch it, seems contrary to common sense; and,
 " were it not clearly demonstrated in the conchoid
 " of Nechomedes, could never be believed. Matter
 " is infinitely divisible; and therefore, a cubical inch
 " of gold may be divided into an infinity of parts;
 " and there can be no number greater than that
 " which contains an infinity. Yet another cubical
 " inch of gold may be infinitely divided also; and
 " therefore,

“ therefore, the parts of both cubes must be more
 “ numerous than the parts of one only. Here is a
 “ palpable contrariety of ideas, and a flat contra-
 “ diction of terms. We are confounded and lost in
 “ the consideration of infinities ; and surely, most of
 “ all, in the consideration of that *Infinite of infinities*.
 “ We justly admire that saying of the philosopher,
 “ that *God is a Being whose centre is every where, and*
 “ *circumference nowhere*, as one of the noblest and
 “ most exalted flights of human understanding ; and
 “ yet, not only the terms are absurd and contradic-
 “ tory, but the very ideas that constitute it, when
 “ considered attentively, are repugnant to one ano-
 “ ther. Space and duration are mysterious abysses
 “ in which our thoughts are confounded with de-
 “ monstrable propositions, to all sense and reason
 “ flatly contradictory to one another. Any two
 “ points of time, though never so distant, are exact-
 “ ly in the middle of eternity. The remotest points
 “ of space that can be imagined or supposed, are
 “ each of them precisely in the centre of infinite
 “ space.” Deism revealed, vol. ii. p. 109, 110, 111.

Here might have been added the mysteries of God's
 eternal duration, it being without succession, present,
 before and after, all at once : *Vita interminabilis tota*
simul et perfecta possessio. See the nature of the human
 soul on this head.

10. To reject every thing but what we can first
 see to be agreeable to our reason, tends, by degrees,
 to bring every thing relating not only to revealed re-
 ligion, but even natural religion, into doubt ; to
 make all its doctrines appear with dim evidence, like
 a shadow, or the ideas of a dream, till they are all
 neglected as worthy of no regard. It tends to make
 men doubt of the several attributes of God, and so,
 in every respect, to doubt what kind of being God
 is ; and to make men doubt about the forgiveness of
 sin, and about the duties of religion, prayer and
 giving thanks, social worship, &c. It will tend, at
 last,

last, to make men esteem the science of religion as of no value, and so totally neglect it; and from step to step it will lead to scepticism, atheism, ignorance, and at length to barbarity, &c.

11. Concerning common sense, it is to be observed, that common inclination, or the common dictates of inclination, are often called common sense. When any thing is shocking to the common dispositions or inclinations of men, that is called a contradicting of common sense. So, the doctrine of the extreme and everlasting torments of hell, being contrary to men's common folly and stupidity, is often called contrary to common sense. Men, through stupidity, are insensible of the great evil of sin; and so the punishment of sin threatened in the word of God disagrees with this insensibility, and is said to be contradictory to common sense. In this case, that turn of mind which arises from a wicked disposition, goes for common sense.

" We ought never to deny, because we cannot
 " conceive. If this were not so, then a man born
 " blind would reason right, when he forms this syl-
 " logism, " We know the figure of bodies only by
 " handling them; but it is impossible to handle them
 " at a great distance; therefore, it is impossible to
 " know the figure of far distant bodies." To unde-
 " ceive the blind man, we may prove to him that
 " this is so, from the concurrent testimony of all
 " who surround him. But we can never make him
 " perceive how this is so. It is therefore a funda-
 " mental maxim in all true philosophy, that many
 " things may be incomprehensible, and yet demon-
 " strable; that though seeing clearly be a sufficient
 " reason for affirming, yet, not seeing at all, can ne-
 " ver be a reason for denying." Ramsay's Philoso-
 phical Principles of Religion, vol. i. p. 22, 23.

12. One method used to explode every thing that is in the least difficult to the understanding, out of religion,

religion, is to ridicule all distinctions in religion. The unreasonableness of this may appear from what Mr Locke observes concerning discerning and judgment. Hum. Underst. book ii. chap. 2. "Accurately discriminating ideas one from another, is of that consequence to the other knowledge of the mind, that, so far as this faculty is in itself dull, or not rightly made use of, for distinguishing one thing from another, so far our notions are confused, and our reason and judgment disturbed or misled. If in having ideas in the memory ready at hand, consists quickness of parts; in this, of having them unconfused, and being able nicely to distinguish one thing from another, where there is but the least difference, consists in a great measure the exactness of judgment, and clearness of reason, which is to be observed in one man above another. Judgment lies in separating carefully one from another, ideas wherein can be found the least difference, thereby to avoid being misled by similitude, and by affinity to take one thing for another."

So Dr Turnbull, in his Principles of Moral Philosophy, part i. chap. 3. p. 94. "Judgment is rightly said to lie in nicely distinguishing the disagreements and variances or differences of ideas; those especially which lie more remote from common observation, and are not generally adverted to. The man of judgment or discretion (for so discretion properly signifies), may be defined to be one who has a particular aptitude to descry differences of all kinds between objects, even the most hidden and remote from vulgar eyes."

13. If any respect to the Divine Being is of importance, then speculative points are of importance; for the only way whereby we know what he is, is by speculation. He is a speculative being in that sense. If our doctrines concerning him are not right, it will not be that Being, but some other, that we have respect

spect for. So it may be said concerning our respect for Christ. If our doctrines concerning him, concerning his divinity, for instance, are false, we have not respect for the Christ of whom the Scriptures speak, but for an imaginary person, infinitely diverse. When it is said by some, that the only fundamental article of faith is, that Jesus is the Messiah; if thereby be meant, that a person called by that name, or that lived at such a time or place, was the Messiah, that name not implying any properties or qualities of his person, the doctrine is exceedingly unreasonable; for surely the name and the place are not of so great importance as some other things essential in his person, and have not so great concern in the identity of the object of our ideas and respect, as the person the gospel reveals. If that Jesus the gospel tells us of be a divine person, then to suppose a Jesus that is a mere man, makes the object of our ideas and regard infinitely more diverse from the gospel Jesus, than to have a different name, and to suppose him to be of a different time and place. It is one great reason why speculative points are thought to be of so little importance, that the modern religion consists so little in respect to the divine Being, and almost wholly in benevolence to men.

14. Concerning this which is often said by some, that all things that are necessary to salvation are plain and clear, let us consider how, and in what sense, this is true, and in what sense it is not true. 1st, It is true, that all things that are necessary to salvation are clearly and plainly revealed. But it does not follow, that they shall *appear* to be plainly revealed to *all men*. Nothing, no divine thing, can have evidence sufficient to appear evident to all men, however great their prejudices are, and however perverse their dispositions. 2^{dly}, If thereby is meant, that all things necessary to be believed are easily comprehended, there is no reason in such an assertion, nor is it true.

Some late writers insist, that, for a thing to be revealed, and yet remain mysterious, is a contradiction; that it is as much as to say, a thing is revealed, and yet hid. I answer: The thing revealed is the truth of the doctrine; so that the truth of it no longer remains hid, though many things concerning the manner may be so. Yet many things concerning the nature of the things revealed may be clear, though many things concerning the nature of the same things may remain hid. God requires us to understand no more than is intelligibly revealed. That which is not distinctly revealed, we are not required distinctly to understand. It may be necessary for us to know a thing in part, and yet not necessary to know it perfectly.

15. The importance of all Christian doctrines whatsoever, will naturally be denied, in consequence of denying that one great doctrine of the necessity of Christ's satisfaction to Divine justice, and maintaining those doctrines that establish men's own righteousness, as that on which, and for which, they are accepted of God. For that great Christian doctrine of Christ's satisfaction, his vicarious sufferings and righteousness, by which he offered an infinite price to God for our pardon and acceptance to eternal favour and happiness, is what all evangelical doctrines, all doctrines beside the truths of natural religion, have relation to; and they are of little importance, comparatively, any other way, than as they have respect to that. This is, as it were, the centre and hinge of all doctrines of pure revelation.

16. Indeed, the Papists, who are very far from having such a notion of that evangelical faith, which is the special condition of salvation in opposition to works, and have forsaken the evangelical notion of true saving religion, yet, with fiery zeal, insist on the profession of a great number of doctrines, and several of the doctrines of pure revelation,

tion, as the Trinity, &c. But this in them flows not from any regard to their influence in internal saving religion, but from quite another view, *i. e.* to uphold their tyranny. These are the doctrines which have been handed down among them by their church from ancient tradition; and, to maintain the credit of the infallibility, and divine authority and dominion, of their hierarchy, over men's faith, they must be zealous against any that presume to deny Christ's doctrines, because they look upon it as an infringement on the high authority they claim. And some Protestants have a zeal for doctrines from like views; doctrines that indeed they have no great value for, in themselves considered.

17. That it is not alone sufficient to believe that one article, that a person of the name of *Jesus* came from God to reveal his will to man, without knowing or determining what he was, or concerning his nature and qualities, is evident from this, that it is often spoken of as necessary to *know* Christ. It is said, "This is eternal life, to know thee, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

18. There are two things especially that make modern fashionable divines look on doctrines of revealed religion of little importance. One is, their mistake about the conditions of salvation; another is, their mistake about the nature of true virtue, placing it chiefly, and most essentially, in benevolence to men, and so little in respect to God and Christ. If Christian virtue consists very much in a proper respect to Christ, then certainly it is of great importance to know what sort of person he is, at least, as to that particular wherein his excellency or worthiness of regard consists, which is surely his divinity, if he be a divine person. Another thing on which a proper respect to him depends, is his relation to us, and our dependence upon him; which surely chiefly depends on his satisfaction and merits for us, if he has satisfied and

merited for us. The reasons or grounds of the love and honour to Christ required of us, consist chiefly in two things: (1.) In what he is: And, (2.) In what he has done for us. Therefore, with regard to the latter, it concerns us greatly to know, at least as to the principal things, what they are. And if he has satisfied for our sins; if he has suffered in our stead; if he has truly purchased eternal life and happiness for us; if he has redeemed us from an extremely and perfectly sinful, miserable, helpless state, a state wherein we deserved no mercy, but eternal misery without mercy; then these are principal things.

Another reason why doctrines are thought to be of little importance, is a notion of *sincerity* wherein true virtue consists, as what may be prior to any means of it that God grants; as if it was what every man had in his power, antecedently to all means; and so the means are looked upon as of little importance. But the absurdity of this may be easily manifested. If it be independent of all means, then it may be independent of natural information, or of the truths of the light of nature, as well as of revealed religion: and men may sincerely regard and honour they know not what. The truths of natural religion, wherein Christians differ from the most ignorant, brutish, and deluded idolators, the most savage and cruel of the heathen nations, may be of little importance. And the reason why they have this notion of sincerity antecedent to means, and so independent on means, is, that they have a notion that sincerity is independent on God, any otherwise than as they depend on him for their creation. They conceive it to be independent on his sovereign will and pleasure. If they were sensible that they depend on God to give it according to his pleasure, it would be easy and natural to acknowledge, that God gives it in his own way, and by his own means.

19. If any article of faith at all concerning Jesus Christ be of importance, it must be of importance to know or believe something concerning his person; who he is, and what he was; what sort of a person or being he was. And if any thing concerning him be of importance to be known and believed, it must be something wherein his excellency or worthiness of regard consists: For nothing can be of importance to be known or believed about him, but in order to some regard or respect of heart. But most certainly, if any thing of his excellency and dignity be of importance to be known or believed, it must be of importance at least to know so much about him, as to know whether he be God or a mere creature; for herein lies the greatest difference, as to dignity, that possibly can be. This difference is infinite. If it be of importance to know how worthy he is, then it doubtless is of importance that we should not be ignorant of, and deny, as it were, all his dignity, or so much of it, that what remains shall be absolutely as nothing to that which is denied. It is of importance that we love Christ, or have respect to him as one that is excellent, and worthy of esteem and love. The apostle says, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maranatha." And doubtless, true love to Christ is in some respect suitable to the worthiness and excellency of his person. Therefore it is of importance to believe, and not to deny those doctrines which exhibit his worthiness. It is of importance that we do not in effect deny the whole of his worthiness.

20. How many things were believed by the ancient philosophers about divine matters, even the most rational of them more mysterious than the doctrine of the Trinity, chiefly because such things were handed to them by the Phœnicians, Egyptians, Chaldeans, or Persians, or on the authority of some great master? Yet these things were imbibed without much

difficulty, the incomprehensibleness of the doctrines being no objection to their receiving them.

21. There are things evidently true concerning the nature of our own souls, that seem strange paradoxes, and are seeming contradictions; as, that our souls are in no place, and yet have a being; or, if they are supposed to be in a place, that yet they are not confined to place, and limited to certain space; or, if they be, that they are not of a certain figure; or, if they are figurate, that their properties, faculties, and acts, should or should not be so too.

22. If many things we all see and know of the mortality of mankind, the extreme sufferings of infants, and other things innumerable in the state of the world of mankind, were only matter of doctrine which we had no notice of any other way than by revelation, and not by fact and experience; have we not reason to think, from what we see of the temper of this age, that they would be exceedingly quarrelled with, objected mightily against, as inconsistent with God's moral perfections, not tending to amiable ideas of the Godhead? &c. &c.

23. The definition of a *mystery*, according to Stapferus, Theol. Polem. p. 263. & 858. is this: A *mystery* is a religious doctrine, which must be made known by immediate revelation, and cannot be known and demonstrated from the principles of reason, but is above reason, and which in this whole universe has nothing like itself, but differs from all those truths which we discover in this system of the world.

Ibid. p. 859. It appears from the definition, that whatever is known by divine revelation, and is not certain from the principles of reason, is a *mystery*; otherwise it could not be said to be revealed.

Revelation cannot be conceived of without *mysteries*; and *mysteries* are the first thing which we conceive

conceive concerning revelation; for no revelation can be conceived without mysteries, and therefore they constitute the sum and essence of revelation.

It is to be observed, that we ought to distinguish between those things which were written in the sacred books by the immediate inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and those which were only committed to writing by the direction of the Holy Spirit. To the former class belong all the mysteries of salvation, or all those things which respect the means of our deliverance taught in the gospel, which could not be known from the principles of reason, and therefore must be revealed. But to the other class those things belong, which either are already known from natural religion, but are of service to inculcate duty on man, and to demonstrate the necessity of a revelation of the means of salvation; or are histories, useful to illustrate and to assure us of the doctrines revealed, and which point out the various degrees of revelation, the different dispensations of salvation, and the various modes of governing the church of God: all which are necessary to be known in the further explanation of mysteries.

Mysteries constitute the criterion of divine revelation: so absurdly do they act, who allow a revelation, and deny mysteries; or deny revelation for this reason, that it contains mysteries.—What the sum and essence of revelation, or of revealed religion, are, is plain from the end of it, which is this, to point out to sinful man the mean of obtaining salvation, and of recovering the divine favour. But this mean is, that Jesus Christ is the only and most perfect cause of salvation, to be received by a true faith. This doctrine, however, is a mystery of godliness manifestly great; 1 Tim. iii. 16. And thus that great mystery constitutes the sum and essence of revelation: The essence of revealed religion consists in this, that men by a true faith receive this doctrine, which the apostle calls a mystery manifestly great. Therefore,
the

the knowledge of the greatest mystery belongs to the very essence of the religion of a sinner.

How absurd do many of the doctrines of mathematicians and astronomers appear to ignorant men, when they cannot see the reason of those doctrines, although they are most true and evident, so that not the least doubt concerning them can remain in the mind of a thorough mathematician? Ibid. tom. iii. p. 560.

Since, in religion, there are some primary truths, and others more remote, which are deduced from the former by reasoning, and so are secondary, and these last may not be known, though the primary are known, but when once they are known they cannot be denied; it follows, that those articles which constitute religion, and so are fundamental, are to be distinguished into primary and secondary. The primary are those of which a man cannot be ignorant, consistently with true religion and his own salvation; and they are necessary with a necessity of *means*. The secondary are those of which a man may be ignorant, consistently with his resting upon the foundation of true religion, and with his own salvation; and those are necessary with a necessity of *command*. Therefore, to the same man, certain doctrines may be now fundamental, which were not fundamental to him before he knew them. Ibid. tom. i. p. 524, 525.

Job. Chr. Kirchmejerus, in his Dissert. concerning fundamental articles, says, "They may be either reduced to fewer, or extended to more; as often one article may include the rest, and so all may be reduced to that one; and, on the other hand, that one, according to the various truths contained in it, may be divided into several. Therefore, authors do not contradict themselves, who reduce all fundamental articles to one: for they cannot well be determined by their number; because as many fundamental truths are contained in one fundamental truth, as there are essential properties belonging to the truths thus contained. Therefore,

“ Therefore, the holy scripture often fums up all
 “ fundamental articles in one, as in Joh. xvii. 3.
 “ This is life eternal, that they might know thee the
 “ only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast
 “ sent.” Sometimes it distinguishes them into several;
 “ as in 1 Tim. i. 5. “ Now the end of the
 “ commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and
 “ of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.”
 Ibid. tom. i. p. 528.

On account of the various degrees of men's capacities, and the various circumstances of the times in which they live, one man may know truths which another cannot know. Whence it follows, that the very same articles are not fundamental to all men; but accordingly as revelation hath been more or less compleat, according to the several dispensations under which men have lived, their various natural abilities, and their various modes and circumstances of living, different articles are, and have been, fundamental to different men. This is very plain from the different degrees of knowledge before and since the coming of Christ; for before his coming, many truths lay hid, which are now set in the most clear light: And the instance of the apostles, abundantly shows the truth of what I have now advanced; who, although they were already in a state of grace, and their salvation was secured, yet for some time were ignorant of the necessity of the sufferings and death of Christ, and of the true nature of his kingdom. Whereas, he who now does not acknowledge, or perhaps denies, the necessity of Christ's death, is by all means to be considered as in a fundamental error. Therefore, as a man hath received of God greater or less natural abilities, so let the number of articles to which he shall give his assent be greater or smaller; and as revelation hath been made, or information hath been given, to a man, more clearly or obscurely, in the same proportion is more or less required of him. Therefore, in our own case, we ought to be cautious of even the smallest

lest errors, and to aim at the highest degree of knowledge in divine truths. In the case of others, we ought to judge concerning them with the greatest prudence, mildness, and benevolence. Hence we see, that a certain precise number of articles, which shall be necessary and fundamental to every man, cannot be determined. Ibid. p. 531.

If one single article of faith be so comprehensive, that in it are involved all things necessary to salvation, a man is not to be condemned as a latitudinarian, or as indifferent to all other doctrines, because he says that one article only is fundamental. For instance, That by the grace of the Triune God, Jesus, the true and eternal God, having assumed the human nature, became, through his satisfaction for sin, by his sufferings and death, the only and most perfect cause of our salvation; who therefore, together with the whole sacred Trinity, is, in the way of self-denial, to be sought, loved, and worshipped. Ibid. p. 532.

PART III.

OBSERVATIONS CONCERNING THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST AND THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY.

1. IF the temptation to the children of Israel was so great, to idolize the Brazen Serpent, a lifeless piece of brass, for the temporal salvation which some of their forefathers had by looking on it; how great would be their temptation to idolatry by worshipping Christ, if he were a mere creature, from whom mankind receive so great benefits?

If that Brazen Serpent must be broken in pieces, to remove temptation to idolatry, 2 Kings xviii. 4. shall so great a temptation be laid before the world to idolize a mere creature, by setting him forth in the manner that he is set forth in Scripture?

Must

Must Moses's body be concealed, lest the children of Israel should worship the remains of him whom God made the instrument of such great things? And shall another mere creature, whom men, on account of the works he has done, are under infinitely greater temptation to worship, instead of his being concealed to prevent this, be most openly and publicly exhibited, as exalted to heaven, seated at God's own right hand, made Head over all things, Ruler of the universe, &c. in the manner that Christ is?

Was not this the temptation to all nations to idolatry, viz. That men had been distinguished as great conquerors, deliverers, and the instruments of great benefit? And shall God make a mere creature the instrument of so many infinitely greater benefits, and in such a manner as Christ is represented to be in the scripture, without an infinitely greater temptation to idolatry?

When the rich young man called Christ Good Master, not supposing him to be God, did Christ reject it, and reprove him for calling him so, supposing him not to be God; saying, There is none good but One, that is God; meaning, that none other was possessed of that goodness that was to be trusted? And yet, shall this same Jesus, though indeed not God, not that God who only is to be called good, or trusted in as such, be called in scripture, He that is Holy; He that is True? the Amen; the Faithful and True Witness? the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace? the blessed and the only Potentate; the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords? the Lord of Life, that has life in himself, that all men might honour the Son, as they honour the Father? the Wisdom of God, and the Power of God? the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End? God, Jehovah; El-ohim, the King of Glory? Compare Isa. xlii. 8. Ps. lxxxiii. 18. Isa. xlv. 20, 21., &c. "They pray unto a God that cannot save—Tell ye and bring them near; let them take counsel together—There is no God else beside me, a just God and a Saviour; there

is none besides me." Yet it is said of Christ, that "He is able to save unto the uttermost." Yea, the Messiah, in this very book, is spoken of as mighty to save; saving by his own arm, and by the greatness of his strength, Isa. lxiii. 1—6. compared with Rev. xix. 15. And it is evident, that it is his character, in the most eminent manner, to be the Saviour of God's people; and that with respect to what is infinitely the highest and greatest work of salvation; the greatest deliverance from the most dreadful evil, from the greatest, worst, and strongest enemies, and bringing them to the greatest happiness. It follows, Isaiah xlv. 22. "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else." Here it is spoken of as the great glory of God, and peculiar to him, that he is an universal Saviour, not only of the Jews, but of all nations. And this is the peculiar character of Jesus. He is the Saviour of all nations. The glory of calling and saving the Gentiles, is represented as peculiarly belonging to him; so that he has this divine prerogative, which is spoken of here as belonging to the One only God, and to none else. And, which is more than all this, these very things that are spoken here and in the next verse about God, as the only Saviour, and the honour and trust due to him on that account, are applied to Christ in the New Testament, Philip. ii. 10, 11. "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth." And the things spoken of in the following verses, as the peculiar prerogative of God, in distinction from all other beings, as the only Saviour, viz. having righteousness, and being justified in him, are every where in the New Testament most eminently ascribed to Christ, as in a most special manner belonging to him.

Being the Saviour of God's people, is every where in the Old Testament mentioned as the peculiar work of the Deity. The heathens are from time to time reproached for worshipping gods that could not save;
and

and God says to the idolatrous Israelites, "Go to the gods whom ye have served, let them deliver you." See Isaiah xliii. 3, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, in which verses we have another clear demonstration of the divinity of Christ. See also Hof. xiii. 4. See also Isa. xlix. 26. and lx. 16. Deut. xxxiii. 29. Jer. iii. 23. Jonah ii. 8, 9. Psalm iii. 8. Isa. xxv. 9.

Trusting is abundantly represented as a principal thing in that peculiar respect due to God alone, as a principal part of the essence of divine adoration due to no other than God. And yet, how is Christ represented as the peculiar object of the faith and trust of all God's people, of all nations, as having all sufficiency for them? Trusting in any other, is greatly condemned; is a thing, than which nothing is represented as more dangerous, provoking to God, and bringing his curse on man.

Men are abundantly called upon to trust in Christ, not only in the New Testament, but in the Old; as in the end of the 2d Psalm, and elsewhere.

And how often is being the Redeemer of God's people spoken of as the peculiar character of the mighty God of Jacob, the First and Last, the Lord of Hosts, the only God, the Holy One of Israel? So Isa. xli. 14., xliii. 14., xliv. 6. 24., xlvii. 4., xlviii. 17., xlix. 7. 26., liv. 5.; and lx. 16. And it may be observed, that when God has this title of the *Redeemer of Israel* ascribed to him in those places in this book, it is from time to time joined with some other of the peculiar and most exalted names and titles of the Most High God: such as, the Holy One of Israel; so Isa. xli. 14., xliii. 14., xlvii. 4., xlviii. 17., xliv. 5. and xlix. 7. The Mighty One of Jacob, chap. xlix. 26., and lx. 16. The Lord of Hosts, Isa. xlvii. 4., and xlv. 6. The God of the whole earth, chap. liv. 5. The First and the Last, besides whom there is no God, xlv. 6. The Jehovah that maketh all things, that stretcheth forth the heavens alone, and spreadeth abroad the earth by himself, ver. 24.

Yet the Messiah, in this very book, is spoken of as the Redeemer of God's people in the most eminent manner, chap. lxiii. 1—6.; and the name Jehovah is given to him; the King, the Lord of Hosts, the Holy One; Isa. vi. 1—5.; the Mighty God, Isa. ix. 6.

God is careful that his people should understand, that their honour and love and praise for the redemption out of Egypt, belongs alone to him, and therefore is careful to inform them, that he alone redeemed them out of Egypt, and that there was no other God with him; and to make use of that as a principal argument why they should have no other Gods before him. See Deut. xxxii. 12.; Exod. xx. 3.; Psal. lxxxix. 8, 9, 10.; Hos. xiii. 4.

The words in that place are remarkable: "Yet I am the Lord thy God from the land of Egypt; and thou shalt know no God but me; for there is no Saviour besides me." If God insisted on that as a good reason why his people should know no God besides him, that he alone was their Saviour to save them out of Egypt; would he afterwards appoint another God to be their Saviour in an infinitely greater salvation?

The works of creation being ascribed to Christ, does most evidently prove the proper divinity of Christ: For God declares, that he is Jehovah 'that stretched forth the heavens alone, and spread abroad the earth by himself, Isa. xlv. 24. See also the next chapter, xlv. 5, 6, 7, 12. And not only is the creation of the world ascribed to Christ often in scripture, but that which in this book of Isaiah is called the New creation, which is here represented as an immensely greater and more glorious work than the old creation, viz. the work of redemption, as this prophet himself explains it, (Isa. lxxv. 17, 18, 19.) is every where, in a most peculiar and distinguishing manner, ascribed to Christ. 2 Peter i. 1. "Through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:"

Εν δικαιοσυνη του Θεου ημων και σωτηρος ημων Ιησου Χριστου. Tit. ii. 2. "Looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ;"

Christ;" Του μεγάλου Θεου και σωτήρος Ιησου Χριστου. It is agreeable to the manner of the apostle's expressing himself in both places, to intend one and the same person, viz. Christ, under two titles: As when speaking of God the Father, in Eph. i. 3. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," & Θεος και πατηρ. See Dr Goodwin's works, vol. i. p. 23, 24.

Compare the following texts one with another, Gen. i. 26.; John i. 1, 2, 3, 4; Isa. xl. 13, 14.; Isa. ix. 6.; 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11.; John v. 17, 18, 19.; Isa. vi. 8.; Prov. viii. 27—31.; John xvii. 21, 22.

That passage in Isaiah xl. 13, 14., "Who hath directed the spirit of the Lord?" proves Christ's divinity; for Christ directs the spirit of the Lord. See John xvi. 13—15., and many other places.

Compare the following texts, set in opposite columns, extracted from Dr Waterland's Answer to some Queries.

In the texts in the first column, Names, Attributes, Works, and Worship, are represented as belonging to God only, which yet, in the second column, are given to Christ.

THE NAME GOD.

Isaiah xlv. 5.	John i. 1.
— xlv. 8.	Heb. i. 8.
— xlv. 9.	Rom. ix. 5.

THE NAME JEHOVAH.

Psalms cii. 25, &c.	Heb. i. 10.
Zech. xi. 12.	Matt. xxvii. 9, 10.
Zech. xii. 10.	John xix. 37.
Isaiah xl. 3.	Mark i. 3.
Hos. i. 7.	Luke ii. 11.

DIVINE PERFECTIONS.

1 Kings viii. 39.	John ii. 24. xvi. 30. and Acts i. 24.
Jer. xvii. 10.	Rev. ii. 3.

(DIVINE PERFECTIONS continued.)

Isaiah xliv. 6.

Rev. i. 17.

Rev. i. 8.

Rev. xxii. 13.

1 Tim. vi. 15.

Rev. xvii. 14. & xix. 16.

Isaiah x. 21.

Isaiah ix. 6.

Rom. x. 12.

Acts x. 36. Rom. ix. 5.

Psalm xc. 2.

Prov. viii. 22, &c.

DIVINE WORKS.

Neh. ix. 6.

John i. 3. Col. i. 16, 17.

Gen. i. 1.

Heb. i. 10.

DIVINE WORSHIP.

Exod. xx. 3.

Heb. i. 6.

Matt. iv. 10. & Gal. iv. 8.

John v. 23.

If Christ in the beginning created the heavens and the earth, he must be from *eternity*; for then he is before the beginning, by which must be meant, the beginning of time; the beginning of that kind of duration which has *beginning* and *following*, before and after, belonging to it. The beginning of created existence, or, *the beginning of the creation which God created*, as the phrase is, Mark iii. 19.

In Proverbs viii. 22, it is said, "The Lord possessed me before his works of old;" and therefore before those works which in Genesis i. 1. are said to be made in the beginning. God's eternity is expressed thus, Psalm xc. 2. "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst created the earth and the world, even from everlasting." So it is said, Prov. viii. 22., and "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water; before the mountains were settled; before the hills was I brought forth; when as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world."

In

In Heb. vii. 3., Christ is spoken of as being "without beginning of days or end of life;" and in Micah v. 2., his goings forth are said to be "of old, from everlasting."

Moses's building an altar, and calling it *Jehovah-nissi*, is an evidence that Christ is Jehovah. It is he especially that is set up as the banner or ensign of the church, agreeable to Isaiah xi. 10.; and the rod of Moses, that was held up by Moses over Israel, in that battle with Amalek, was manifestly typical of that rod out of the stem or root of Jesse, there spoken of.

That the kingdom of the Messiah is so commonly called the *kingdom of heaven*, is an evidence that the Messiah is God. By the kingdom of heaven is plainly meant a kingdom wherein God doth reign, or is King. The phrase, the kingdom of heaven, seems to be principally taken from Dan. ii. 44. "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom;" where the meaning plainly is, after the heads of those four great monarchies have each one had their turn, and erected kingdoms for themselves in their turn, and the last monarchy shall be divided among ten kings; finally, the God of heaven shall take the dominion from them all, and shall set up a kingdom for himself. He shall take the kingdom, and shall rule for ever.

In this book, chap. iv. 26., "After that thou shalt have known that the heavens do rule." The words in the foregoing verse express what is meant: "Until thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men." Therefore, by the kingdom of heaven which shall be set up, is meant the kingdom wherein God himself shall be the king; not as reigning and administering by other kings or judges, as he was king in the time of the Judges, and in the time of David and Solomon, Hezekiah and Josiah, &c., and as he always doth in the time of good kings: but he shall set up a kingdom that shall be his kingdom, in a distinction from all kingdoms or states that ever were

administered by created heads, and wherein he himself shall reign; wherein the heavens shall rule, or God himself shall be king. And therefore the kingdom of heaven is often called the kingdom of God, in the New Testament. And it is abundantly prophesied in the Old Testament, that in the days of the Messiah, God shall take to himself the kingdom, and shall reign as king, in contradistinction to other reigning subordinate beings. And that God himself shall reign on earth, as king among his people, is abundantly manifest from many prophecies; as Psalm xciii. 1., xcvi. 10., xcvi. at the beginning, and xcix. 1.; Isa. xxxiii. 22.; Isa. xl. 9, 10, 11.; Zeph. iii. 14, 15.; Mal. iii. 1, 2, 3. And in this very prophecy of Daniel, chap. vii., where this kingdom, which the Lord of heaven should at last set up (plainly this same kingdom), is more fully spoken of, it is manifest, that it is the Messiah that is to be the king in that kingdom, who shall reign as vested with full power, and complete kingly authority. He is the Anointed King; see Dan. ix. 25. So he is abundantly spoken of as king of God's people in the principal prophecies; as in Jacob's prophecy, in the blessing of Judah, Gen. xlix.; and in Balaam's prophecy, and in God's promises to David, and in David's last words, and in Psalms ii., cx., lxxxix., and xlv.; and in those great prophecies of the Messiah, Isaiah ix. and xi.; Zech. vi.; Jer. xxiii. 5.; xxx. 9., and xxxiii. 15.; Ezek. xxxiv. 23. and xxxvii. 24.; Hos. iii. 5.; Zech. vi. 12. &c.; and in many other places.

God is several times called in scripture, the *Glory of Israel*, or of God's people; and it is a title given him as peculiar to him, wherein he appears as especially distinguished from false gods. Jer. ii. 11.; "Hath a nation changed their gods, which yet are no gods? but my people have changed their Glory for that which doth not profit." Psalm cvi. 20., "Thus they changed their Glory into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass."

But

But we find that Christ in the New Testament is spoken of as "the Glory of God's people Israel." Luke ii. 23.

What is said in Job xix. 25, 26, 27., "For I know that my Redeemer liveth," &c., is a proof of the divinity of Christ. For here, (1.) He that Job calls his Redeemer, his *Goel*, is God; for he calls him God: "Yet in my flesh shall I see God." But it is very manifest, that Christ is he that is most properly and eminently our Redeemer or *Goel*: And, (2dly), Here Job says, that God shall stand at the latter day, and at the general resurrection, on the earth; when he shall see him in his flesh. But the person that shall then stand on the earth, we know, is no other than Jesus Christ. And how often, in other places, both in the Old Testament and the New, is Christ's coming to judgement, spoken of as God's coming to judgement? Christ's appearing, as God's appearing? and our standing before the judgement seat of Christ, as our standing before God's judgement seat?

Luke i. 16, 17. "And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God; and he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of fathers to the children, and of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." Here John the Baptist is spoken of as going before the Lord, the God of the children of Israel, to prepare his way; agreeably to the prophecies; particularly, Mal. iii. 1. and iv. 5, 6.

But who is this person who is called the Lord, the God of Israel, whose forerunner, John the Baptist, is to prepare his way? Nothing is more manifest, than that it is Jesus Christ. See Mark i. 1, 2, 3. "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God: as it is written in the prophets, Behold I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight," (alluding to two prophecies, viz.

viz. Mal. iii. 1., and Isaiah xl. 3.) Here is a distinction of two persons; the one speaking in the first person singular, "Behold I send my messenger;" the other spoken to in the second person, "before *thy* face, which shall prepare *thy* way before *thee*;" which makes it evident that the person spoken of, and as whose forerunner he was to prepare his way, was Jesus Christ. So Matt. xi. 10.; Luke vii. 27. See also how manifest this is by John i. 19. "And this is the record of John." Verse 23. "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Isaias;" with the following verses, especially ver. 31. "And I knew him not, but that he should be made manifest to Israel: therefore am I come baptizing with water."

So that it is evident, that Christ is he that in the 1st of Luke is called the Lord, the God of Israel; or, Jehovah the God of Israel, as the phrase is in the original of the Old Testament, in places from whence this phrase is taken; though rendered here in the Greek, according as those places are rendered in the Septuagint.

Therefore it is evident, that Christ is one God with God the Father; for the Scripture is very express, that that Jehovah who is the God of Israel is but one Jehovah; as, Deut. vi. 4. "Hear, O Israel, Jehovah our God is one Jehovah."

And if we look into those prophecies of the Old Testament referred to in these places of the evangelists, it is manifest, that what they foretel concerns a forerunner to prepare the way for the only true and supreme God; as, Isa. xl. 3. "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of *Jehovah*; make straight in the desert a high way for *Our God*." This is evidently the same that is spoken of in the following parts of the chapter; as in ver. 9. 10. and following verses: "Say unto the cities of Judah, Behold *Your God*; behold *Jehovah God* will come.—He shall feed his flock like a shepherd.—Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand? and meted

meted out heaven with a span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who hath directed the spirit of the Lord, or, being his counsellor, hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment? Behold, the nations are as a drop of the bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance. Behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt-offering. All nations before him are as nothing, and they are counted to him less than nothing and vanity. To whom then will ye liken God? or what likenesses will ye compare unto him?"—Ver. 22. "It is he that sitteth on the circle of the earth, and all the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in; that bringeth the princes to nothing, and maketh the judges of the earth as vanity."

If the Supreme God is not spoken of here, where shall we find the place where he is spoken of? If it be an infinitely inferior being that is here spoken of, where is God's distinguishing greatness, and infinitely superior magnificence spoken of? It here follows, ver. 25. "To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One." This plainly shews, that it is the supreme, unequalled, unparalleled God, that is here spoken of. A created being would not use such language, or make such a challenge. He that is created himself, would not say, as it follows in the next verse, "Lift up your eyes on high; behold, who hath created those things?"

So it is evident, that it is the One only God that is spoken of, whose forerunner John was to be. Malachi, iii. 1. "Behold I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before ME. And *Jehovah*, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come into his temple." That

That God whose forerunner John the Baptist is, is spoken of, as was observed before, as the God of Israel. But he is spoken of as the Supreme God : 2 Chron. vi. " O Lord God of Israel, there is no God like thee, in the heaven, nor in the earth." See also Ps. lxxvii. 13. And he is spoken of as the only God ; Isai. xlv. 3. " I *Jehovah*, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel." Ver. 5. " I am *Jehovah*, and there is none else ; there is no God besides me." Ver. 6. " That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none besides me ; I am *Jehovah*, and there is none else." Ver. 14, 15. " Surely God is in thee, there is none else ; there is no God. Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour."

That the God, as whose forerunner John the Baptist was to prepare his way, was the Supreme God, is very expressly declared in the New Testament ; as in Luke i. 76. " And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the *Highest*, *Aliv* ; for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord, to prepare his way."

It is a great evidence that Christ is one being with the Supreme God, that the Spirit of the Supreme God is spoken of as his Spirit, and a Spirit proceeding from him, and sent and directed by him. The Spirit that the prophets of old were inspired by, is spoken of as being the Spirit of Christ : 1 Pet. i. 11. " Searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ, which was in them, did signify ; when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."

But it is very manifest, that the Spirit that the prophets of old were inspired by, was the Spirit of the one only living and true God ; by which it came to pass, that their word was the word of this God, as the scripture uniformly intimates : so that we must needs understand, that the word written by the prophets is the word of the Supreme God. See 2 Pet. i. 21. ; 2 Tim. iii. 16. And that they spoke by inspiration of the Spirit of the Supreme God, is manifest

fest from Luke i. 69, 70. " And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us, in the house of his servant David; as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began."— Now, none will deny, but that the God that has raised up Christ as an horn of salvation for us, is the Supreme God: though we see, that this God spoke by the mouth of the prophets. Again, none will deny, but that it is the Supreme God who is spoken of, Heb. i. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. " For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. And again, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him. And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever," &c. Ver. 10. " And, thou, Lord, in the beginning, hast laid the foundations of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands. They shall perish, but thou remainest," &c. But if it is the Supreme God that is spoken of as saying these things, then the prophets and inspired penmen of the Old Testament spoke by inspiration of the Spirit of the Supreme God. For as to most of these things, God said them in no other sense than as the inspired penmen of the scriptures said them. So God said, Ps. civ. 4. " He maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire," no otherwise than as the penman of that psalm said so by inspiration of his Spirit. In the same sense it was that God said in the 45th psalm, 6th and 7th verses, " Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever," &c. Neither was it any otherwise that God said in the 102d psalm, ver. 25., &c. " Thou, Lord, in the beginning, hast laid the foundation of the earth," &c. The word *Spirit*, in the original languages, signifies *wind*, and sometimes is used to signify *breath*. Therefore, Christ breathed on his disciples, when he would

would signify to them that he would give them the Holy Ghost : Joh. xx. 22. " And when he had said this, he breathed on them, saying, Receive ye the Holy Ghost." This plainly teaches us that the Holy Ghost was his Spirit, as much as man's breath is his breath. But the Holy Ghost is the Spirit of the Supreme God, and the Spirit of God the Father. For it was partly on this account that the Virgin Mary's child is called the Son of God, because it was conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost. Luke i. 35. Which shows, that the Holy Ghost, by whose power he was conceived, was the Spirit of the Father.

Again, it is evident, that the Spirit of God is the Spirit of Christ, as much as a person's eyes are his own eyes. Rev. v. 6. " And I beheld, and lo in the midst of the throne stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth." Alluding to Zech. iii. 9. " Upon one stone shall be seven eyes." But these seven eyes, in the next chapter, are spoken of as representing the Spirit of God, and the eyes of Jehovah : Chap. iv. 6. " Not by might nor power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord." Ver. 10. " And shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel, with those seven. They are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth."

Christ is spoken of as sending the Holy Ghost, and directing him : Joh. xvi. 7. " I will send him unto you." Ver. 13, 14, 15. " Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth, for he shall not speak of himself ; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak ; and he shall shew you things to come. He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine ; therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you." But it is spoken of as the peculiar prerogative

rogative of God to direct his Spirit. Isai. xl. 13.

“ Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord ? ”

“ Not all the wit of man, I believe, can devise a medium between the Creator and the creature, whatever excellency of nature, or dignity of station, he might be distinguished by. Suppose him a super-angelic spirit, incarnate in the human nature, still he must be only ranked with the hosts of the Lord, and not be distinguished by the honourable ascription of this most devoted divine character, the Lord of Hosts.” Mr Foxcroft’s Sermon occasioned by the Earthquake, on Isai. xxix. 6.—Jesus Christ is called *the Lord of Hosts*, in Isai. vi. 3.

It is true, that creatures are sometimes called *God*. The kings and judges of God’s Israel, the ancient church, are called Gods; but no otherwise than as types of Christ. And the angels, the highest of all, are called Gods. Yet it is very remarkable, that in that only place where they are so called by God, they are commanded to worship Christ; and in the same verse, a curse is denounced on all such as are guilty of idolatry. Ps. xcvi. 7. compared with Heb. i. 6.

The name that God calls himself by, viz. *Jealous*, and his so often speaking of himself as a jealous God, signifying that he will by no means endure any other husband of his church, affords a clear evidence, that Jesus Christ is the same God with God the Father. For Christ is often spoken of as that person who is, in the most eminent and peculiar manner, the Husband and Bridegroom of his church. And it is very manifest, that that God who is the same God with God the Father, is the Husband of the church. For it is that God who is the Holy One of Israel, that is the husband of the church, as appears by Isai. liv. 5. “ Thy Maker is thy husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.” Or, as the words are, “ Thy Goel, the Holy One of Israel.” The goel was the near kinsman, that married the widow who had lost her

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husband,

husband, as appears by Ruth iii. 9,—12. And such a desolate widow the church is represented here, in this chapter, at the beginning. But this Holy One of Israel is the name of that God who is God the Father, as appears by Isai. xlix. 7. and lv. 5.; and so, is the Lord of Hosts, as appears by Isai. xliv. 6.

We may strongly argue the divinity of Christ from 2 Cor. iv. 6. "For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our heart, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ;" or, in the person of Jesus Christ, as the same word sometimes signifies; as, Luke xx. 21.—2 Cor. i. 11. and ii. 10.—Gal. ii. 6.—Jude iii. 16. Whether the latter be the most proper translation or not, yet, doubtless God's glory, as exhibited in the person of Christ, is meant; and what is intended, is the highest manifestation of glory that ever was made, even that by the gospel; which the apostle speaks of as the highest. This appears by ver. 4. and by chap. iii. 9, 10, 11, 18. But if the greatest glory of God that ever he manifests to men, be in the beauty and excellency of the person of Christ, surely he is the supreme most glorious God. It cannot be his will, that we should show higher respect to the supreme God than to him, and adore him as infinitely more excellent and glorious than the Son, if in using the utmost means that ever he has used to gain our respect, and excite our adoration, he has made no greater manifestation of his glory, than what is held up to view, in exhibiting the excellencies and beauties of Christ's person.

Christ is the Lord, mentioned in Rom. x. 13. "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved." That it is Christ who is spoken of, is evident from the two foregoing verses; and also from the next verse, the 14th. But the words are taken from Joel ii. 32. where the word translated Lord, is Jehovah. See also 1 Cor. i. 2.

That text is a clear proof of Christ's divinity; 1 Cor. ii. 16. "For who hath known the mind of the
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the Lord that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ." And so is that in 1 Cor. ix. 21. "Being not without law to God, but under law to Christ."

And 1 Cor. x. 9. "Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted." By this, it appears, that Christ was that God, that Holy One of Israel, whom they tempted in the wilderness. 1 Cor. x. 22. "Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than He?" It is evident, that by the Lord here, is meant Jesus Christ, as appears by the preceding context; and that therefore, He is that Being who says, "I the Lord thy God am a jealous God."

Rev. ii. 23. Christ says, "I am he that trieth the reins and the heart, and will give to every one of you according to his works." This is said by the Son of God, as appears by the 18th verse foregoing. Compare this with other passages of Scripture, where these things are spoken of as the prerogative of the Supreme God. Parallel with it is John xxi. 17. "O Lord, thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee."

Raising of the dead is spoken of, as an instance of the exceeding greatness of the mighty power of God the Father; Eph. i. 19. But this very power is often ascribed to Christ, as in Philip. iii. 20, 21. "We look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able to subdue all things to Himself." See also John v. 21, 28. compared with ver. 17, 18, 19.

It would be unreasonable to suppose, that there is one Being infinitely greater than all other Beings, so that all others are as nothing to him, and infinitely beneath him in power; and yet, that there is no kind of works or effects of his power, that is peculiar to him, by which he is greatly distinguished from others. He that appeared sitting on the throne above the

the cherubims and wheels in Ezekiel's visions, (Ezek. i. 27., and other places), was undoubtedly Christ; because he appeared in the shape of a man, which God the Father never did. "No man hath seen God, viz. the Father, at any time:" but the person that there appeared, was undoubtedly God. He is represented as one that has heaven for his throne, and sits as Supreme Ruler of the universe. This is undoubtedly the same that rides on the heavens in the help of his people, and in his excellency on the sky; that rides on the heaven of heavens by his name Jah, or Jehovah. And this is called the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord, or image of the glory of the Lord; Ezek. i. 28. iii. 23. and viii. 4. This, while it shews him to be a person truly divine, also shews him to be Christ. For what can this image of the Lord, with an appearance of brightness round about, ver. 27, 28. be, but the same which the apostle speaks of, who is, he says, "the brightness of God's glory, and the express image of his person?" and this is evidently the same that sat on the throne in the temple, that was called the Chariot of the Cherubims. And this person is called the God of Israel, Ezek. x. 20; and the whole that this person says to Ezekiel from time to time, shews, that he is truly God.

See after what manner the work of creating the world is claimed as the peculiar work of God, and a thing wherein it appears that none can be like Him, or can be compared unto Him; Is. xl. 18., and ver. 22, 25, and 28.; so Is. xlv. 24.

Christ's existing before the creation of the world, proves that he is God. See Is. xliii. 13.

It is a great evidence of the divinity of Christ, that the Holy Ghost is so put into subjection to him, as to become his messenger; even the Spirit of God, as the Holy Ghost is often called, or the Spirit of the Father, as he is called, Matt. x. 20. The same that is there called the Spirit of the Father, is in Mark
xiii.

xiii. 11. called the Holy Ghost. Now, certainly, it is unreasonable to suppose, that the Spirit of the Supreme God should be put under the direction and disposal of a mere creature, one infinitely below God, under the disposal of His will.

The only evasion here, must be this, that the Holy Ghost is also a created spirit inferior to the Son. For if Christ be a mere creature, it would be unreasonable to suppose, that he should have the Spirit of God subjected to him, on any other supposition, whether the Spirit of God be supposed to be only the power and energy of the Most High, or a superior created Spirit.

But how does the Holy Ghost, being a creature inferior to the Son, consist with Christ's being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost? and his being honoured by having the Holy Ghost descending upon him? and being anointed with it, and working his greatest miracles by the power of the Holy Ghost? and its being a great honour done to Christ, that the Spirit was given to him not by measure?

And besides, the Holy Ghost's being a creature not only infinitely inferior to God, but inferior to the Son, who is infinitely inferior to Him, is exceedingly inconsistent with almost every thing said of the Holy Spirit, or Spirit of God, in Scripture: As, his being called the Power of the Highest; his searching all things, even the deep things of God, and knowing the things of God in the most distinguishing manner, as the spirit of man within him knows the things of a man; the Scripture's being the word of God, as it is the word of the Holy Ghost; Christians being the temple of the living God, as they are the temple of the Holy Ghost; lying unto the Holy Ghost being called lying unto God; the chief works of God being ascribed to the Holy Ghost, as the works of creation, and the forming of man in the womb. Eccles. xi. 5. "Thou knowest not what is the way of the Spirit," &c. Job xxxiii. 4. "The Spirit of God hath

hath made me ;" giving life, as in the latter part of that verse : Giving Adam his life and spirit ; God breathed into him the breath of life : Giving understanding to the heart of man ; giving wisdom ; there is a spirit in man, the inspiration of the Almighty giveth me understanding : Giving the highest sort of wisdom, viz. spiritual understanding ; forming the human nature of Christ ; being the author of regeneration, sanctification, creating a new heart ; and so being the Author of the new creation, which is spoken of as vastly greater than the old.

Blasphemy against the Father is pardonable ; but not against the Holy Ghost. It is unreasonable to suppose that only the body of Christ was made by the Holy Ghost. It is evident, that the whole human nature, the holy thing that was born of the virgin, was by the Holy Ghost ; Luke i. 35. But the Son of the virgin was a holy thing, especially with regard to his soul. The Spirit of God infuses the souls of other men. The soul of Adam, more especially, was from the Spirit of God, from God's breathing into him the breath of life. But this breath of life signifies the Spirit of God, as appears by Christ's breathing on his disciples after his resurrection, saying, " Receive ye the Holy Ghost." The Spirit of God is called the Breath of God ; Job xxxiii. 4. " The Spirit of God hath made me ; the breath of the Almighty hath given me life." If God's Spirit gives life to other men, or mankind in general, doubtless he gave life to Adam. And if that Spirit of God which gives life to mankind in general, be, in doing that work, called the Breath of God ; we may well suppose, that when we find that which gave life and soul to Adam, called God's Breath, thereby was meant God's Spirit.

The Spirit of God is represented as giving life to the body, and infusing the living soul into it in a resurrection or restoration to life. In Ezek. xxxvii. 9, 10. it is called wind and breath. But the same word in the original, which signifies wind and breath, signifies

signifies spirit; and the Spirit of God is often in Scripture expressly compared to wind, as in John iii. 8. Acts ii. 2. Cant. iv. 16. If it be the work of the Spirit of God to give understanding to the soul of man, we may well argue from this, that it is the work of the Spirit of God to give that rational intelligent thing the soul, and that the faculty of understanding, as well as the habit, is from him. But giving understanding to the heart, is spoken of as the work of the Spirit of God. Job xxxii. 8. "There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth him understanding." Compare chap. xxxv. 11. and xxxviii. 36. Prov. ii. 6. Dan. ii. 21.

It is the work of the Spirit of God to renew the soul, which the Scripture represents as creating it anew, and a greater work than the first creation of it; and therefore, doubtless, it is the work of the Spirit to create it at first.

Again, it is the work of the Spirit of God to form Christ in the souls of men, in their regeneration; whereby a renewed person is represented as becoming, as it were, the mother of Christ, as resembling the formation of Christ in the womb of his mother. But this formation of Christ in the soul, is more like the causing of Christ, both soul and body, to be born of the virgin, than the body only.

How unreasonable must our notions be of the creation of the world, on Arian principles? For it is manifest by the Scripture, that the world was made by the Holy Ghost, or Spirit of God, as well as by the Son of God. But the Son of God is, according to them, a created Spirit; and the Spirit of God must therefore also be a created Spirit inferior to him.

Therefore, we must suppose, that the Father created the world by the Son, and that the Son did not create the world by himself, but by the Spirit of God, as his minister or instrument. So that the Spirit of God herein must act as the instrument of an instrument.

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2. It is evident that the same Word, the same Son of God, that made the world, or gave it being, also upholds it in being, and governs it. This is evident, in part, unto reason. For, upholding the world in being, and creating of it, are not properly distinct works; since it is manifest, that upholding the world in being is the same with a continued creation, and consequently, that creating the world, is but the beginning of upholding it, if I may so say; the beginning to give the world a supported and dependent existence: and preservation is only the continuing to give it such a supported existence. So that, truly, the giving the world a being at first, no more differs from preserving it through all successive moments, than the giving a being the last moment, differs from the giving a supported being this moment.

And the Scripture is as express, that the world is upheld by Christ, as that it was created by him; Colos. i. 16, 17. "For by Him were all things created, and by Him all things consist." Heb. i. 2, 3. "By whom also He made the worlds, and upholding all things by the word of His power." And it is He that shall bring the world to an end. Heb. i. 10, 11, 12. "Thou, Lord, in the beginning, hast laid the foundations of the earth, &c. They shall perish, but Thou shalt endure. As a vesture shalt Thou change them, and they shall be changed. But Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail."

But if these things are so, what shall we think of the upholding and government of the world, while Christ was in his humbled state, and while an infant, when he had less knowledge than afterwards? when it is said that he increased in wisdom and stature, and had far less strength than he had afterwards? when we are told that he was wearied with his journey, wearied, and his strength in some measure spent, only with governing the motions of his own body? Who upheld and governed the world at that time? Doubtless, it will be said, that God the Father took the world out of the hands of the Son for that time,

to uphold and govern it, and returned it into his hands again at his exaltation. But, is there any ground to suppose such a mighty change as this, as to the author of the universe, that it should have such different authors of its being, and of all its properties, natural principles, motions, and alterations and events, both in bodies and all created minds, for one three or four and thirty years, from what it had ever before or since? Have we any hint of such a thing? or, have we any revelation of any thing analogous, that ever has been? Has God ever taken the work of a creature out of its hands, that which is that creature's ordinary operation and care, according to the ordinary course of things? Has he ever taken that out of that creature's hands, performing it precisely and exactly in the same manner that that creature did, as if the creature still went on in his own way; and then returned it into the hand of the creature again; so that no interruption, not even the smallest, should appear?

The Supreme God is doubtless distinguished by some works or other. As he must be infinitely distinguished from all other beings in his nature; so, doubtless there are some manifestations or other of this vast superiority of his, above all other beings. But we can have no other proper manifestations of the divine nature, but by some effects of it; for we cannot immediately look upon and behold God, and see what he is intuitively. The invisible things of God are seen by the things that are made. The word of God itself is no demonstration of the superior distinguishing glory of the Supreme God, any other-wise than by the works of God; and that two ways:

1. As we must have the perfections first proved by his works, in order to know that his word is to be depended on.
2. As the works of God, appealed to and declared in the word of God, declare and make evident that divine greatness and glory which the word of God declares.

There is a difference between declaration and evidence. The word declares; but the

the works are the proper evidence of what is declared.

Undoubtedly, therefore, the vastly distinguished glory of the Supreme God, is manifested by some distinguishing peculiar works of his. That the Supreme God is distinguished very remarkably and most evidently from all other beings, by some works or other, is certain by the Scripture. It is often represented, that he most plainly and greatly shews his distinguishing majesty, power and wisdom, and vast superiority to other beings, by his works that are seen, and set in the view of the children of men. So Psalm lxxxvi. 8. "Among the gods there is none like unto thee, neither are there any works like unto thy works;" see also verse 10. Exod. xv. 11. "Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like unto thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?" Psalms lxxxix. 5, 8, 9, 10. "The heavens shall praise thy wonders:—for who in heaven can be compared to the Lord? who amongst the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord? O Lord of hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee, or to thy faithfulness round about thee? Thou rulest the raging of the sea; when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them. Thou hast broken Rahab in pieces," &c. Psalm cxxxvi. 2, 3, 4. "O give thanks unto the God of Gods—O give thanks unto the Lord of Lords—To him who alone doth great wonders." Deut. iii. 24. "What God is there in heaven or in earth, that can do according to thy works, and according to thy might?" Psalm lxxii. 18. "Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doth wondrous things." Psalm lxxvii. 13, 14. "Who is so great a God as our God? Thou art the God that doest wonders. Thou hast declared thy strength among the people." See Psalm iii. 1—8. Psal. cxlv. 3—5. "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unchangeable. One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts. I will speak of the glorious honour
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of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous works: And men shall speak of the might of thy terrible acts. And I will declare thy greatness." Ver. 11, 12. "They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power; to make known to the sons of men thy mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom." Isaiah xxviii. 29. "This also cometh forth from the Lord of Hosts, which is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working." Jer. xxxii. 18, 19. "The great, the mighty God, the Lord of Hosts, is his name; great in counsel, and mighty in work." Psalm xcii. 5. "O Lord, how great are thy works?" This is often added to the declarations of God's works, "*That ye may know that I am the Lord, or that I am Jehovah:*" And this, "*That ye may know that there is none like unto me,*" &c. Exod. viii. 10, 22.; chap. ix. 14, 16.; and x. 2.; and innumerable other places.

But now, what are these distinguishing works of God? or the works by which his distinguishing dignity and glory are clearly manifested and plainly to be seen? What works are they that can be named or thought of? Is it CREATING the world? Or is it the creating of the spiritual, intellectual world, which undoubtedly is an unspeakably greater work, than creating the material world?

Is it PRESERVING and upholding the world? Or is it GOVERNING the world? Or is it REDEMPTION and salvation; or at least some particular great salvation? Was it the redemption out of Egypt, and carrying the people of Israel through the wilderness, and giving them the possession of Canaan? Or is it the greatest work of redemption of all, that which is infinitely greater than that from Egypt; even salvation from spiritual, total and eternal destruction, and bringing to eternal holiness and glory? Or is it some new spiritual creation, that is vastly greater and more noble than the old? Is it conversion, regeneration, restoring a fallen, sinful creature, and making men new creatures, giving them holiness, and the image of God in the heart; or giving wisdom to the heart,
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the truest and greatest wisdom? Is it the conversion of the Gentile world, and renewing the whole world of mankind, as consisting of Jews and Gentiles? Or is it conquering Satan and all the powers of darkness, and overcoming all evil, even the strongest holds of sin and Satan, all God's enemies in their united strength? Is it searching the hearts of the children of men? Is it working miracles, or any particular kind of great miracles? Is it raising the dead to life, or raising all in general at the last day? Is it judging the world, angels and men? - Is it judging all in the last and greatest judgment? Is it bestowing on the favourites of God, both men and angels, their highest, most consummate, and eternal glory? Is it destroying the visible creation, and bringing all to their final period and consummation, and to their most perfect and eternal state? Or, are there any other works greater than any of these, that can be thought of, which we can find appealed to from time to time, as clearly manifesting the most peculiar and distinguishing glory of the Supreme God, in comparison of whom all other beings whatsoever are absolutely as nothing?

Concerning all those particular works which have been mentioned, these two things are evident in Scripture, 1. That they all are spoken of God, as the peculiar works of the Supreme God; by which he manifests his divine, supreme, and most distinguishing glory. 2. That they, every one of them, are plainly ascribed to Christ in Scripture.

(1.) It is thus with respect to the work of the creation of the world in general, and especially the creation of the intellectual, spiritual world.

Thus it is as to the creation of the world in general.

This is often spoken of as the peculiar work of the Supreme God, a work wherein he manifests his glory as supreme, and distinguished from all other beings: Rom. i. 19, 20. "Because that which may be known of God, is manifest in them. For God hath

hath shewn it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things which are made, even his eternal power and godhead." Doubtless it is the Supreme God who is here spoken of. And what godhead of the Supreme God is clearly to be seen by the creation of the world, but his supreme Godhead? And what can that invisible glory and power of this God, here spoken of, be, but that by which he is distinguished from other beings, and may be known to be what he is? It is said, "that which may be known of God, is clearly manifest by his works." But doubtless, one thing, and infinitely the most important, that may be known of God, is his supreme dignity and glory, that glory of His which he has as Supreme God.

But if the creation of the world be not a work peculiar to him, how are these things so clearly manifested by this work?

Again, the work of creation is spoken of as one of the great wonders done by Him, who is God of Gods and Lord of Lords, who alone doth great wonders; as in Ps. cxxxvi. 2,—9. "O give thanks unto the God of Gods.—O give thanks to the Lord of Lords.—To him who alone doth great wonders.—To him that by wisdom made the heavens.—To him that stretched out the earth over the waters.—To him that made great lights,—The sun to rule by day," &c.

This work is spoken of as the work of the Supreme God, which he wrought alone, Job ix. 8. "Which alone spreadeth out the heavens." And 2 Kings xix. 15. "O Lord God of Israel, which dwellest between the cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth: Thou hast made heaven and earth."

1 Chron. xvi. 24, 25, 26. "Declare his glory among the Heathen, his marvellous works among all nations. For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised. He is also to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the people are idols: But the Lord
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made the heavens." Here, how plain are these things? viz. That that glory of God which is here spoken of, is his glory as the Supreme God; and above all gods; and that this glory of his is clearly manifested by his marvellous works, and particularly by his making the heavens: That by this, that glory and supreme greatness is clearly manifested, which shews him to be worthy of supreme worship, or to be feared and praised above all gods. We have the same again, in almost the same words, in Psalm xcvi. 3, 4, 5.

In Neh. ix. 5, 6. the creation of heaven and earth is spoken of as a glorious work of God, manifesting the peculiar glory of him who is Jehovah alone: "Bless Jehovah, your God, for ever and ever; and blessed be thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise." Which implies, at least, that he is exalted above all that blessing and praise that any other being can claim. Again, "Thou, even thou, art Jehovah alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their hosts, the earth, and all things that are therein."

Isaiah xl. 25, 26. "To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things." How plain is it here, that creating the world is spoken of as a work of the Supreme God, most evidently shewing that none is like him, or to be compared to him? So ver. 12. compared with ver. 18.

God asserts the creation of the world to be his work only, so as to deny any associate or instrument; as in Isa. xlv. 24. "Thus saith Jehovah, thy Redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am Jehovah that maketh all things, that stretcheth forth the heavens *alone*, that spreadeth abroad the earth *by myself*."

This also is claimed as the peculiar distinguishing work of God, the only true God, in the xlvth chapter of Isaiah. In verses 5, 6, 7, God says, "I am Jehovah, and there is none else; there is no God be-

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sides me : That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none besides me ; I am the Lord, and there is none else ; I form the light, and create darkness." Ver. 12. " I have made the earth, and created man upon it : I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens." Ver. 18. " Thus saith Jehovah that created the heavens, God himself that formed the earth and made it." Ver. 21. " I am Jehovah, and there is no God else beside me ; a just God and a Saviour, there is none beside me."

God's creating the world, is made use of as an argument, to shew the nations of the world the reasonableness of forsaking all other gods, and worshipping the One true God only. Rev. xiv. 7. " Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him, and worship him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." See also Acts xiv. 15., and Rev. x. 6.

The work of creation is spoken of as the distinguishing work of the Supreme only Living and True God, shewing him to be alone worthy to be worshipped ; as in Jer. x. 6, 7, 10, 11, 12. " Forasmuch as there is none like unto thee, O Lord, Thou art great, and thy name is great in might. Who would not fear thee, O king of nations ? for to thee doth it appertain. Jehovah is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting King."—" Thus shall ye say unto them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens. He hath made the earth by his power : He hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion."

The work of creation is spoken of as the work of the only Supreme God, the First and the Last. Isa. xlviii. 12, 13. " I am he ; I am the First and the Last. Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth ; my right hand hath spanned the heavens."

So creation is spoken of as the work of the only God in Psal. c. "Know ye, that Jehovah, he is God: It is he that made us."

That the works of creation do most manifestly shew, that they are the workmanship of the Supreme God; so that his power and his glory are manifest in creation, in contradistinction to any other workman, is most plainly and undeniably represented in Job, xii. 7, 8, 9.

"But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee: or speak to the earth and it shall teach thee, and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee. Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of Jehovah hath wrought this?" Psal. xix. 1,—4. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun." See Job xxxviii. 5,—10. and Psal. civ.

But the creation of the world is ascribed to JESUS CHRIST, in John i. 3.; Col. i. 16.; Heb. i. 10. It is ascribed to him as being done by his power, as the work of his hands, Heb. i. 10. And in the same place, it is spoken of as his work in such a manner, as to be a proper manifestation of his greatness and glory; and it is so mentioned as being his work, as to shew him to be God, John i. 1, 2, 3.

Is the creation of the spiritual, intelligent world, consisting of angels, and the souls of men, and the world of glory, a peculiar work of the Supreme God? Doubtless it is so, and is so spoken of. God's creating the souls of men in particular; Zech. xii. 1. "Which formeth the Spirit of man within him." Numb. xvi. 22. "The God of the Spirits of all flesh." In Numb. xxvii. 16. God has the same title; and in Heb. xii. 9. God is called "the Father of Spirits." Eccl. xii. 7. "The Spirit shall return to God
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that gave it." Isa. lvii. 16. " And the souls which I have made." So the creation of angels, and that glorious invisible world where they dwell; as in Neh. ix. 6. " Thou, even Thou, art Lord alone. Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host: And the host of heaven worshippeth Thee." Psal. civ. 4. " Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire."

But the creation of the spiritual and intelligent world, in every part of it, is also ascribed to Christ. For it is said, John i. 3. " The world was made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made." And to him is expressly ascribed the creation of the invisible world, and of the angels in particular, even the very highest and most exalted of them; and all the most glorious things in the invisible heaven, the highest and most glorious part of the creation of God. Col. i. 16. " By him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible," (these include the invisible things on earth, as well as heaven, even the souls of men); " whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him."

Preserving the creation, is spoken of as the work of the One only Jehovah, Neh. ix. 6. " Thou, even Thou, art Jehovah alone. Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host; the earth, and all things that are therein; and Thou *preservest them all*." Isa. xl. 26. " Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number. He calleth them all by names by the greatness of his might; for that he is strong in power, not one faileth." Job xii. 7, 8, 9, 10. " But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; who knoweth not in all these, that the hand of Jehovah hath made this, in whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind?" See also Psal. xxxvi. 6, 7.

But the preservation of the creation is also ascribed to Christ; Heb. i. 3. " Who being the brightness of his

his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power." Colos. i. 17. "By him all things consist."

Governing the creation, is another thing often spoken of as the peculiar work of God; as in Isa. xl. 21. to the end. There, governing the world, is spoken of as the manifest peculiar work of Him, to whom none is like and none equal. And, in Isa. xlv. 1,—13, governing the world, making peace, and creating evil, and doing all such things; bringing to pass revolutions in nations, &c.; are spoken of as the peculiar works of Him who is Jehovah alone, and God alone. See 2 Chron. xxix. 11, 12.; and Psal. xxii. 28.; xlvii. 2., &c. Governing both the natural and moral world is spoken of as the peculiar work of the Great Jehovah, to whom none is like; the Jehovah, the true God, the living God; and the King of eternity; as in Jer. x. 6,—13. and xiv. 22.

So it is spoken of as the peculiar work of the First and the Last, i. e. the Only God, to govern the world which God hath made, Isa. xlviii. 12, 13. The government of the natural world from day to day, is spoken of as God's peculiar work, most plainly and manifestly to the reason of all mankind, in Psal. xix. 1,—6. But Christ is often, in the New Testament, spoken of as the Governor of the world, is prayed to as such, and spoken of as He whose will disposes all events.

Sitting as king in heaven, having his throne there, and governing the universe for the salvation of his people, are spoken of as peculiar to the Supreme God, that God to whom none is like, in Deut. xxxiii. 26, 27. "There is none like the God of Jeshurun," &c. See also Psal. ciii. 19.; cxxxv. 4, 5, 6, &c.; cxlii. 4,—9.; cxv. throughout; and xi. 4.

But, how often and eminently are these things ascribed to Christ! His having his throne in heaven; being exalted far above all heavens; thrones, dominions, &c. being made subject to him; being made Head over all things to the church, &c. &c.

Judging

Judging the world is another thing spoken of as peculiarly and distinguishingly belonging to the Supreme God, 1 Sam. ii. 3. 10.; Job xxi. 22.; Psal. xi. 4, 5.; lxxv. 6, 7.; lxxxii. 1. 8. Judg. xi. 27. Psal. xciv. 2.

Judging the world at a general, public judgment, is spoken of as the peculiar work of God. Psal. l. 1—7. "The Mighty God, even Jehovah, hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof. Our God shall come; a fire shall devour before him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people: And the heavens shall declare his righteousness; for God is Judge Himself. Hear, O my people, and I will speak; O Israel, I will testify against thee. I am God, even thy God." This 50th Psalm begins thus: EL ELOHIM JEHOVAH, "The God of gods, Jehovah; or the Most Mighty God, even JEHOVAH." Who can believe that these three most magnificent names of the Deity are thus united, to signify any other than the Supreme God? See also Psal. ix. 7, 8.; 1 Chron. xvi. 25. 26,—33.; Psal. xcvi. 4, 5,—13. Also Psal. xcvi.

But it is apparent, that Christ is abundantly spoken of as eminently the Judge of the world, the Judge of the whole universe, of all nations, of all degrees, quick and dead, angels and men. We are particularly and fully instructed, that it is his distinguishing office to judge the world, by John v. 22.; 2 Tim. iv. 8.; Rev. xix. 11. and many other places.

Destroying the world at the consummation of all things, is spoken of as a peculiar work of God; Psal. cii. 25, 26, 27. This is there spoken of as the work of Jehovah, ver. 1. 12. 16. 18. 21. 22.; and of Him who is the God of the people of God, and the Creator of the world, ver. 24. 25. 28. See also Psal. xcvi. 1,—6. and Nah. i. 4, 5, 6. Jer. x. 6, 7. 10. Psal. xlv. 6.; civ. 32.; cxliv. 5. Isa. lxiv. 1, 2, 3. Job. ix. 4,—7. But this is spoken of as the work of the Son of God, Heb. i. latter end.

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The wonderful alterations made in the natural world, at the coming out of Egypt; the giving of the law, and entrance into Canaan; are often spoken of as the peculiar works of God, greatly manifesting the divine majesty, as vastly distinguished from all other Gods: such as, dividing the sea; drowning Pharaoh and his hosts there; causing the earth to tremble, the mountains to quake at his presence, the heavens to drop, the hills to skip like rams and lambs; Jordan being driven back; the sun and moon standing still, &c. &c.

But these were infinitely small things, in comparison with what shall be accomplished at the end of the world, when the mountains and hills shall indeed skip like rams and lambs, and shall be thrown into the midst of the sea; and not only some particular mountains shall quake, but the whole earth, yea, the whole visible world, shall be terribly shaken, shaken to pieces. Not only shall Mount Sinai be on fire, as if it would melt, but all the mountains, and the whole earth and heavens shall melt with fervent heat; the earth shall be dissolved even to its centre. And not only shall the Red Sea and Jordan be dried up for a few hours, in a small part of their channels, but the whole ocean, all the seas and oceans and rivers through the world shall be dried up for ever. Not only shall the sun and moon be stopped for the space of one day; but they, with all the innumerable mighty globes of the heavens, shall have an everlasting arrest, an eternal stop and end put to their courses. Instead of drowning Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea, the devil and all the wicked shall be plunged into the eternal lake of fire and brimstone, &c. The former kind of effects were but little, faint shadows of the latter. And the former are spoken of as the peculiar, manifest, glorious works of the Supreme One only God, evidently manifesting his peculiar majesty and glory. But the latter are the works of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, as is evident by Heb. i. 10, 11, 12. It is here worthy to be remarked, that
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whereas the scripture teaches, that Christ's majesty shall at the last day appear to be so great in his coming in power and great glory, and in those works which have been just mentioned, his judging the world with so great solemnity, and his so terribly destroying this visible universe; and that the terrible majesty of Christ shall be such, that the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and every bond man, and every free man, shall hide themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains, and shall say to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: I say it is remarkable, that it is said, that when these things shall be, God alone should be exalted, in opposition to men and to other gods, Isa. ii. 10. to the end.

3. The work of *Salvation*, is often spoken of as peculiar to God. It is said, the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord, Psal. xxxvii. 39.; and that salvation belongeth unto the Lord, Psal. iii. 8.; that salvation is of the Lord, Jonah ii. 9. God's people acknowledge him to be the God of their salvation, Psal. xxv. 5.; xxvii. 1.; and Isa. xii. 2. Saving effectually is spoken of as his prerogative, Jer. xvii. 14. "Heal me, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved: for thou art my praise." Psal. lxxviii. 20. "He that is our God, is the God of salvation, and to the Lord our God belong the issues from death."

Salvation is spoken of as being of God, in opposition to men, and to all creature helps, Jer. iii. 23. "Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains: Truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel." Psal. lx. 11. "Give us help from trouble, for vain is the help (Heb. salvation) of man." Ver. 16. "I Jehovah am thy Saviour." Psal. cxlvi. 3. 5. "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom is no help (or salvation). Happy is he that hath the God of

of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God." Salvation in or by any other is denied, Isa. lix. 16. "And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor. Therefore, his arm brought salvation unto him, and his righteousness it sustained him."

It is spoken of as his prerogative to be the Rock of salvation, to be trusted in by men. "Let us make a joyful noise to the Rock of our salvation." See Psal. xcv. 1.; lxii. 2. "He only is my Rock, and my Salvation; he is my Defence." Ver. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. "My soul, wait thou on God alone, for my expectation is from him. He only is my Rock and my Salvation: he is my Defence, I shall not be moved. In God is my salvation and my glory; the Rock of my strength, and my refuge is in God. Trust in him at all times; pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us. Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie. To be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity." See Deut. xxxii. 4.; 2 Sam. xxiii. 3.; Psal. xviii. 2.; 2 Sam. xxii. 1, 2, 31, 32; Psal. xviii. 2, 30, 31, 46.; Isa. xxvi. 4.; Heb. i. 12.

It is said, that there is no other Saviour besides the One only Jehovah; Isa. xliii. 3. "I am Jehovah thy God, the Saviour of Israel;" xliii. 11. "I, even I am Jehovah, and besides me there is no Saviour." Isa. lx. 16. "And thou shalt know that I Jehovah am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob." See Isa. xlvii. 4.; liv. 5. and xlv. 15. "O God of Israel, the Saviour." Ver. 21. to the end; "I Jehovah, and there is no God else besides me. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else." Here observe, that this is given as a reason why all nations in the world should look to him only for salvation, That he only was God; taking it for granted, and as an universally established point, that none but God could be a Saviour. And here salvation is claimed as the prerogative of the One only God, and therefore

fore exclusively of a secondary and subordinate God. It follows, "I have sworn by Myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear. Surely shall one say, In Jehovah have I righteousness and strength. Even to Him shall men come, and all that are incensed against Him shall be ashamed. In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory."

Hosea xiii. 4. "Yet I am Jehovah, thy God from the land of Egypt: and thou shalt know no God but me; for there is no Saviour besides me."

God is so completely the only Saviour of his people, that others are not admitted to partake of this honour, as mediate and subordinate saviours: Hos. i. 7. "I will save them by Jehovah their God, and will not save them by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, by horses, nor by horsemen." And therefore, the heavenly hosts, in giving praise to God, ascribe salvation to him, as his peculiar and distinguishing glory; Rev. xix. 1. "I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluja, salvation and glory, and honour and power unto the Lord our God."

But nothing is more evident, by the express and abundant doctrine of Scripture, than that Jesus Christ is most eminently and peculiarly the Saviour of God's people, and the Saviour of mankind, the Saviour of the world. In John iv. 42. His very name is *Jesus, Saviour*. He is spoken of as the Author of eternal salvation, Heb. v. 9.: And the Captain of the salvation of his people, Heb. ii. 10. a Prince and a Saviour. He is called Zion's salvation, Isaiah lxii. 11. "Behold thy salvation cometh." He is spoken of, as saving by his own strength, and able to save to the uttermost; One mighty to save, and therein distinguished from all others; as in Isaiah lxiii. 1. "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." Ver. 5. "I looked and there was none to help, and I wondered that there was none to uphold. Therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me, and my fury it upheld me."

me." What is said in this place, is meant of Christ, as is manifest by comparing ver. 3. with Rev. xix. 15. And the very same things that are said of Jehovah, the only God, as the only Saviour in whom only men shall trust for salvation, as in Isaiah xlv. 21. to the end, are from time to time applied to Christ in the New Testament. And it is expressly said, Acts iv. 12. "There is salvation in no other, neither is there any other name given under heaven amongst men, whereby we must be saved." And the heavenly hosts, in their praises, ascribe salvation to Christ in like manner as to God the Father, Rev. vii. 10. "Salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb." See also chap. v. Christ is a rock sufficiently sure, and perfectly to be trusted, Isaiah xxviii. 16, 17. 1 Cor. x. 4.

The redemption from Egypt, and bringing the children of Israel through the wilderness to the possession of Canaan, is often spoken of as a great salvation, which was most evidently the peculiar work of the One only Jehovah, greatly manifesting his distinguished power and majesty. 2 Sam. vii. 22, 23. "Wherefore thou art great, O Lord God, for there is none like thee; according to all that we have heard with our ears;" meaning what they had heard of his great name, or the name he had obtained by his wonderful works, in bringing them out of Egypt, &c. as appears by what follows; "And what one nation in the earth is like thy people, even like Israel, whom God went to redeem for a people to himself, and to make him a name, and to do for you great things, and terrible for thy land, before thy people which thou redeemest to thee from Egypt, from the nations and their gods?" And by Exod. vi. 6, 7. "Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am Jehovah, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments.—And ye shall know that I am Jehovah your God." The same work is mentioned

as an evidence, that the doer of it is Jehovah, and that there is none like unto him, and as that which makes known God's name through the earth; chap. viii. 10, 22.; ix. 14, 16.; and x. 2. See also chap. xv. 6—11.; xviii. 11.; and xxxiv. 10.

Deut. iii. 24. "O Lord God, thou hast begun to shew thy servant thy greatness, and thy mighty hand. For what god is there in heaven or in earth, that can do according to thy works, and according to thy might?" Chap. iv. 35. "Unto thee it was shewed, that thou mightest know that Jehovah he is God; there is none else besides him." Exod. xx. 2, 3. "I am Jehovah thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, and out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me." Deut. x. 17. "For the Lord your God is God of Gods, and Lord of Lords, a great God, a mighty and a terrible." And ver. 21. "He is thy praise, and he is thy God, that hath done for thee those great and terrible things, which thine eyes have seen." Josh. iii. 10. "Hereby shall ye know that the living God is among you;" i. e. by his dividing Jordan, &c. See Deut. ix. 26. and xi. 2, 3.

Psaln lxxvii. 14. to the end; "Who is so great a god as our God? Thou art the God that dost wonders. Thou hast declared thy strength among the people. Thou hast with thine arm redeemed the people. The waters saw thee, O Lord," &c. Deut. xxxii. 12. "The Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him." Psalm cxi. 6. "He hath shewed his people the power of his works, that he may give them the heritage of the Heathen."

Josh. iv. 23. to the end; "Jehovah your God dried up the waters of Jordan, as Jehovah your God did to the Red Sea, that all the people of the earth might know the hand of Jehovah, that it is mighty; that you might fear Jehovah your God for ever." Psalm cxxxv. 5, &c. "For I know that Jehovah is great, and that our Lord is above all gods. Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that he did in heaven and in earth, in

the seas, and in all deep places,—who smote the first-born of Egypt,” &c. Hosea xiii. 4. “I am Jehovah thy God, from the land of Egypt, and thou shalt know no god but me : for there is no Saviour besides me.”

But it was Jesus Christ that wrought that salvation ; Isaiah lxiii. 9, 10. “The angel of his presence saved them : in his love and pity he redeemed them, and he bore them, and carried them all the days of old. But they rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit.” This rebelling and vexing of his Holy Spirit is evidently the same thing with that spoken of, Psalm xcv. 8, 9, 10. “As in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness, when your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works. Forty years long was I grieved with that generation.” But it is evident, that he whom they tempted, provoked and grieved, was that God whose great works they saw, and therefore that God who wrought those wonderful works in Egypt and the wilderness : As is evident by the same psalm, ver. 3. where he is called “Jehovah, a great God, and a great King above all Gods.” And it is equally clear by that passage in Isaiah lxiii. just quoted, that it was the *Angel of God's presence* ; and by 1 Cor. x. 9. “Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted.” He whom they tempted, is in Psalm xcv. 1. called the “Rock of their salvation :” and in Deut. xxxii. 4. it is said of Jehovah, that “He is *the Rock* :” and 2 Sam. xxiii. 3. he is called the *Rock of Israel*. And, the rock out of which water came to save the people from perishing, if it was a type of the rock of Israel's salvation, as is very evident, was doubtless a type of him who is called *Israel's Rock*, and “*the Rock of their salvation*.” But that rock was a type of Christ, 1 Cor. x. 10.

And as it is said, Isaiah lxiii. that the Angel of God's presence saved them, &c. ; so it is plain by Exod. xxiii. 20—23. that God's Angel, a different Person from him who acts as first in the affairs of the Deity, brought

brought them into Canaan, &c.—And it is plain, that the person that appeared in the bush, who said his name was *Jehovah*, and *I am that I am*, was the Angel of Jehovah: Exod. iii. 2, 14.; vi. 3.; and Acts vii. 30. And nothing is more evident, by the whole history, than that the same Person brought them out of Egypt: and also, that it was the same Angel which appeared and delivered the ten commandments at Mount Sinai, conversed there with Moses, and manifested himself from time to time to the congregation in the wilderness. Acts vii. 38. “This is He that was in the church in the wilderness, with the angel which spake to him in the Mount Sinai, and with our fathers; who received the lively oracles to give unto us.” That angel that entered into covenant with the people at Mount Sinai, that spake the words of the covenant there, delivered to Moses the tables of the covenant, and appeared in the cloud of glory over the ark of the covenant; doubtless was the same that is called the Angel of the Covenant; Mal. iii. 1. “Behold I will send my Messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me; and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come into his temple, even the Messenger of the Covenant, whom ye delight in. Behold He shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts:” And this messenger without doubt was Christ. It is plain by Heb. xii. 25, 26, 27. that he who spake at Mount Sinai was Christ: “See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven, whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, *yet once more*, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.”

Thus we see, that however the work of salvation be so often spoken of as peculiar to God; yet this salvation out of Egypt, so much celebrated in Scrip-
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ture, is not peculiar to God the Father; but that the Son wrought this work as well as the Father. Therefore let us consider what greater salvation there is celebrated in Scripture, and consider whether that be not a salvation peculiar to God the Father. And it is true, that the Scriptures abundantly speak of an infinitely greater and more glorious salvation than that out of Egypt; viz. the salvation of men from sin, Satan, and eternal death and ruin, and bringing them to the heavenly Canaan, to eternal life and happiness there. This is spoken of as a far greater work than the other. So that, in comparison of it, it is not worthy to be remembered or mentioned. Jer. xx. 6, 7, 8. "Behold I will bring it health and cure, and I will cure them, and will reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth. And I will cause the captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel to return; and I will build them, as at the first. And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me."

"It shall no more be said the Lord liveth," &c.; see also chap. xvi. 14, 15. Isaiah xliii. 18—21. "Remember ye not the former things," &c.—Isaiah lxiv. 3, 4. "When thou didst terrible things which we looked not for: Thou camest down, and the mountains flowed down at thy presence. For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him."

But I need not stop to shew the reader how this great salvation is in Scripture ascribed in a peculiar manner to Christ as the author.

We read in Scripture of two *creations*: The *first*, that which Moses gives an account of in the first chapter of Genesis; the *other*, a spiritual creation, consisting in restoring the moral world, and bringing it to its highest perfection, and establishing it in its eternal.

eternal felicity and glory ; and the latter is spoken of as most incomparably the greatest work ; Isaiah lxxv. 17, 18. and lxxvi. 22.

Now, as creation is so much spoken of as a most peculiar work of the Supreme God, one may well determine, that if the first creation be not so, yet the second is, which is so much greater, and evidently the greatest of all God's works.

But this new creation, which is the same with the work of redemption, is, in the most special manner, spoken of as the work of Jesus: for he is ever mentioned as the great Redeemer and Restorer. This work is committed to him: for this he has a full commission. It is left in his hands; all things are committed to him; all power in heaven and in earth is given him, that he may accomplish this work, and bring it to its most absolute perfection. To this end are subjected to him, thrones, dominions, principalities and powers, and he is made Head over all things; and to this end, the world to come, that is, all the affairs of that new creation, are put in subjection unto him: And he, with regard to all the transactions belonging to this new creation, that are written in the book of God, is the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last. Christ built the house; he built all things especially in this new creation: And he is God. These things are plainly asserted in Heb. iii. 3, 4. "For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, in as much as he who hath builded the house, hath more honour than the house." For every house is builded by some man: but he that built all things is God."

Thus, that work, the work of redemption, which is both the greatest work of salvation, and the greatest work of creation, (the two kinds of works chiefly spoken of in Scripture as divine), is accomplished by the Son of God.

And if any, in order to find out something or other, some work or operation peculiar to God the Father, should suppose, that although this new creation,

and great salvation in general, is wrought by Christ, yet that some particular part, or parts of it, are appropriated to God the Father: I would say further, that each particular part of it is ascribed to Christ. Let us consider each part; particularly, that part of this work which consists in purchasing the redeemed. This, indeed, is ascribed to God, 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. "Which ye have of God; and ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price: therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." Chap. vii. 23. "Ye are bought with a price; be ye not the servants of men." Acts xx. 28. "Feed the Church of God; which he hath purchased with his own blood." But I need not go about to shew particularly, that purchasing the redeemed, is peculiarly ascribed to Christ.

The giving of spiritual and saving *light* is one chief part of the new creation, as creating the light was a chief part of the old creation. The causing of this spiritual light is spoken of as the peculiar work of God. 2 Cor. iv. 6. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," &c. John vi. 45. "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man, therefore, that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto Me." Matt. xi. 25. "At that time, Jesus answered, and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes:" And so, in many other places. But the giving of this light is especially ascribed to Christ, as the Author and Fountain of it. He is called the Light of the world; the Light of life; the true Light, that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He is the Sun of Righteousness. No man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal Him, &c.

So,

So, with respect to *calling* men into Christ's fellowship and kingdom; this, also, is ascribed to God. Rom. viii. 30. "Whom He did predestinate, them He also called." Acts ii. 39. "As many as the Lord our God shall call." 1 Cor. i. 9. "God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord." 1 Thess. ii. 12. "That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto His kingdom and glory." 2 Thess. ii. 13, 14. "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation; whereunto He called you by our gospel." 2 Tim. i. 9. "According to the power of God, who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace." 1 Pet. v. 10. "The God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory." See Rom. ix. 24. 1 Pet. i. 15. But this is ascribed to Jesus Christ. Rom. i. 6. "Among whom also ye are the called of Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. vii. 17. "As the Lord hath called every one." John x. 3. "And He calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out." Ver. 16. "Other sheep have I, which are not of this fold, them also I must bring in; and they shall hear my voice." Eph. i. 18. "That ye may know what is the hope of His calling."

Regeneration, or the changing and renewing of the heart, is spoken of as the peculiar work of God. John i. 13. "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." James i. 18. "Of his own will begat He us with the word of truth; that we should be a kind of first-fruits of His creatures." 1 John v. 1, 4, 18. "Born of God; begotten of him." So 1 John iii. 9. and iv. 7. 1 Pet. i. 3. "Hath begotten us again." Eph. ii. 1, 4, 5. "Hath quickened us." Chap. i. 19. "According to the exceeding greatness of His power," &c.

It is likewise ascribed to Christ. Saints are born of Him in their spiritual generation, and therefore are called His seed; Gal. iii. 29. It is Christ that baptizes

tizes men with the Holy Ghost, which is called the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, and a being born of water and of the Spirit. Christ sanctifies and cleanses the souls of men, by the washing of water, by the word; Eph. v. 26.

Justification, washing from sin, delivering from guilt, forgiving sin, admitting to favour and to the glorious benefits of righteousness in the sight of God, are often spoken of as belonging peculiarly to God. Rom. iii. 26. "That he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." Ver. 30. "Seeing it is one God that justifieth," &c. Chap. viii. 30. "Whom he called, he also justified." Ver. 33. "It is God that justifieth." Is. xliii. 25. "I am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake." Ps. li. 2, 4. "Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin: against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned." Therefore the Jews said, Luke v. 21. "Who can forgive sins but God only?"

But Christ hath power to forgive sins, as it follows in the last mentioned place; ver. 24. "But that ye may know, that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins," &c. He washes us from our sins in his own blood; Rev. i. 5. And he justifies those that know and believe in him. Is. liii. 11. "He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied; by His knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many." The Father hath committed all judgment to the Son, to justify his people, and condemn his adversaries.

Overcoming Satan, and delivering men from him, and giving his people victory over him, are spoken of as the peculiar works of God's glorious power. Is. xxvii. 1. "In that day, Jehovah, with his great and strong sword, shall punish Leviathan the piercing serpent, even Leviathan, that crooked serpent; he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea." Ps. viii. 1, 2. "O Jehovah, our God, how excellent is thy name in all the earth, who hast set thy glory above the heavens! Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast Thou ordained strength, because of thine enemies,

enemies, that Thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger." Ps. xci. 13. "Thou shalt tread on the lions," &c.

But it is the special work of Christ to bruise the serpent's head; to destroy the works of the devil; and that by his own strength. For he is represented as conquering him, because he is stronger than the strong man armed, and so overcoming him and taking from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and spoiling his goods. It is He that has spoiled principalities and powers, and made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them. He is the spiritual Samson; that has rent the roaring lion as he would have rent a kid; and the spiritual David, that has delivered the lamb out of his mouth, and has slain that great Goliath. He is that Michael who fights with the dragon and casts him out; and at last will judge Satan, and cause his saints to judge him, and will utterly destroy him; and will inflict those everlasting torments on him spoken of in Rev. xx. 10. In the apprehension of which he now trembles, and trembled for fear that Christ would inflict those torments on him, when he cried out and fell down before him, saying, "Art Thou come to torment me before the time?" And "I beseech Thee, torment me not."

Should any imagine, that *those* parts of the work of redemption, which are *initial*, and are wrought in *this* world, being more imperfect, may be wrought by the Son of God; but that the more glorious *perfection* of it, which is brought to pass in *heaven*, is peculiar to God the Father: In opposition to this, it may be observed, it belongs to Christ to take care of the souls of his saints after death; to receive them to the heavenly state; and to give them possession of heaven. Therefore the Scriptures represent, that he redeems his saints to God, and makes them kings and priests. He has the key of David, the key of the palace, and the keys of Hades, or the separate state, and of death; and opens, and no man shuts; and shuts, and no man opens. He is gone to heaven as
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the forerunner of the saints. He has, in their name, taken possession of that inheritance which he has purchased for them, that he may put them in possession of it in due time. He is gone to prepare a place for them, that he may, in his time, come and take them to himself, that where he is, there they may be also; and make them sit with him in his throne, and give them the glory which God hath given him. And therefore Stephen, when dying, commended his spirit into Christ's hands.

Or, if any shall say, that not only those parts of salvation that the saints are the subjects of in this world, but also, what they receive in heaven, before the resurrection, is but initial, and exceedingly imperfect, in comparison with what will be brought to pass at the *day of judgement*; and should imagine, that although Christ may accomplish these more imperfect parts of the new creation; yet that far more glorious salvation which shall be effected at the end of the world, when all things shall be brought to their highest consummation, shall be the peculiar work of God the Father: I answer, It is abundantly manifest from Scripture, that the consummation of all things shall be by Christ. He shall raise the dead by his voice, as one that has power and life in himself. He shall raise up the bodies of his saints in their glorious resurrection, making their bodies like to his glorious body; John v. 25, 29. and vi. 39, 40. He, as the universal and final Judge, shall fully purge the world of all filthiness; put an end to all confusion and disorder in it; put all things to rights; and bring every thing to its last and most perfect state. He shall bestow that great gift of eternal life, in both soul and body, on the whole church, and every individual member, in a state of most consummate glory, which is the thing aimed at in all the preceding steps of the great affair of redemption. He shall present his church to Himself and to his Father a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; all in perfect purity, beauty, and glory:
and

and the glory which God hath given him he will give them, in the most perfect manner, that they may reign with him for ever and ever. And thus, he will cause the new Jerusalem to appear in its brightest glory, as a bride adorned for her husband; and will perfect the new creation, and cause the new heavens and new earth to shine forth in their consummate and eternal beauty and brightness; when God shall proclaim, *It is done*; I am Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last: John xi. 25. and v. 22, 23, 27.; Eph. v. 27.; 1 Cor. xv. 20,—28.; Matt. xxv. 34.; 2 Tim. iv. 8.; Luke xxii. 29, 30.; Matt. xxiv. 47.; Rev. ii. 7, 10.; and iii. 21.; Rev. xxii. 11,—17. Christ is represented as being himself the light and glory that enlightens the New Jerusalem, that fills with brightness and glory the church of God, in its last, consummate, and eternal glory; Rev. xxi. 23.

Concerning the name **JEHOVAH**, see Neh. ix. 6. "Thou art *Jehovah alone*: Thou hast made heaven and earth; the heaven of heavens, with all their host; the earth," &c. Deut. iv. 35. "That thou mightest know, that *Jehovah*, he is God; there is none else besides him." So ver. 39. Deut. vi. 4. "Hear, O Israel, Jehovah our God is one *Jehovah*." 2 Sam. xxii. 32. "Who is God, save *Jehovah*? who is a Rock, save our God?" So Psal. xviii. 31. 1 Kings xviii. 39. "*Jehovah*, he is the God: *Jehovah*, he is the God." Psal. cxviii. 27. "God is *Jehovah*." Jer. xvi. 21. "And they shall know that my name is *Jehovah*." When God proclaimed his name in Mount Sinai, Exod. xxxiv. 5, 6. "He passed by and proclaimed, *Jehovah, Jehovah*." Josh. xxii. 22. "*Jehovah*, God of gods; *Jehovah*, God of gods, he knoweth." Hosea xii. 5. "Even *Jehovah*, God of hosts; *Jehovah* is his memorial." Deut. xxviii. 58. "That thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name *Jehovah* thy God." Isa. xliii. 3. "I am *Jehovah* thy God, the holy One of Israel, thy Saviour." Isa. xlvii. 4. "As for our Redeemer, *Jehovah* Zebaoth is his name, the Holy One of Israel." Isa.

Isa. xlviii. 2. "The God of Israel, *Jehovah* Zebaoth is his name." Chap. li. 15. "I am *Jehovah*, thy God, that divided the sea, whose waves roared: *Jehovah* Zebaoth is his name." Chap. liv. 5. "Thy maker is thy husband; *Jehovah* Zebaoth is his name; and thy Redeemer, the holy One of Israel, the God of the whole earth shall he be called." Jer. x. 16. "*Jehovah* Zebaoth is his name." So chap. xxxi. 35. xxxii. 18. "The great, the mighty God, *Jehovah* Zebaoth is his name." And, l. 34. "Their Redeemer is strong: *Jehovah* Zebaoth is his name;" li. 19. Isa. xlii. 8. "I am *Jehovah*, that is my name." Exod. xviii. 11. "*Jehovah* is greater than all gods." Jer. x. 10. "*Jehovah* is the True God; he is the Living God, and an Everlasting King." Amos v. 8. "*Jehovah* is his name." Chap. ix. 6. "*Jehovah* is his name." Exod. xv. 11. "Who is like unto Thee, O *Jehovah*?" 1 Chron. xvii. 20. "O *Jehovah*, there is none like unto Thee." Psal. lxxxvi. 8. "There is none like to Thee, O *Jehovah*." 2 Sam. vi. 2. "Whose name is called by the name of *Jehovah* Zebaoth." Psal. lxxviii. 4. "Extol him that rideth on the heavens by his name *Jah*." Psal. lxxxiii. 18. "Whose name alone is *Jehovah*." It might well be expected, that, in that abundant revelation which God has made of himself, he would make himself known by some one name at least, which should be expressly delivered as the peculiar and distinguishing name of the Most High. And we find it to be so: God has, with great solemnity, declared a certain name as his most peculiar name; that he has expressly and very often spoken of as a name that belongs to him in a most distinguishing manner, and belongs to the Supreme Being only; and hath expressly asserted that it belongs to no other. But, notwithstanding all this, the Arians, to serve their particular purpose, reject this name, as not the distinguishing name of the Supreme God, and fix on some other name, nowhere in so express a manner appropriated to him.

King

King of kings, and *Lord of lords*, are titles peculiar to the Supreme Being. Deut. x. 17. "For the Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of Lords." Psal. cxxxvi. 3. "O give thanks to the Lord of lords, for his mercy endureth for ever." Dan. ii. 47. "Of a truth it is that your God is a God of gods, and Lord of kings." 1 Tim. vi. 14, 15, 16. "Until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see; to whom be honour and power everlasting, Amen." Rev. xix. 11,—16. "He whose name is called the Word of God, hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, and LORD OF LORDS."

5. *Christ's eternity* is abundantly asserted. Psal. cii. 24,—27. "Of old hast Thou laid the foundations of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thy hands: But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end." See ver. 12. "But thou, O Lord, shalt endure for ever, and thy remembrance unto all generations:" compared with Heb. i. 10, 11, 12. "They shall perish, but thou remainest: And they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail:" and also with Gen. xxi. 33. "And called on the name of the Lord, the everlasting God." Deut. xxxiii. 27. "The eternal God is thy Refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." Psal. ix. 7. "The Lord shall endure for ever;" civ. 31. "The glory of the Lord shall endure for ever;" xcii. 8. "But thou, O Lord, art Most High for ever more;" and cxxxv. 13. "Thy name, O Lord, shall endure for ever, and thy memorial throughout all generations." Jer. x. 10. "The Lord is the True God, he is the Living God, and an Everlasting King." Dan. iv.

2, 3. "The signs and the wonders that the High God hath wrought towards me.—His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and of his dominion there is no end." And Lam. v. 19. compared with Dan. vii. 14.; Rom. i. 23. "The incorruptible God." 1 Tim. vi. 16. "The King eternal, immortal." Rev. iv. 9, 10.; v. 14.; x. 5, 6.; and xv. 7. Heb. vii. 3. "Having neither beginning of days, nor end of life."

6. Many things make it manifest, that he that dwelt in the tabernacle and temple, between the cherubims, was Christ. But it is evident, that the God that dwelt there, was the Only true God. 2 Kings xix. 15. "O Lord, God of Israel, which dwellest between the Cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone." And ver. 19. "That all the kingdoms of the earth may know, that thou art the Lord God, even thou only." 1 Kings viii. 6. with ver. 12, 13. 23, 27, 60.

7. All the angels worship Christ. Heb. i. 6. "Let all the angels of God worship him." But this is the prerogative of the Supreme God. Neh. ix. 6. "Thou, even thou, art Jehovah alone: Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host;—and the host of heaven worshippeth thee."

8. The supreme divinity of the Son of God is most manifest from Heb. xii. 24,—26. "And to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel. See that ye refuse not him that speaketh: for if they escaped not who refused him who spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven, whose voice then shook the earth. But now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven." Here I observe,

(1.)

(1.) It is plain, that he who spake, whose voice shook the earth, meaning him that spake at Mount Sinai, was the Supreme and only God.

(2.) It is manifest, that he that speaks to us from heaven now under the gospel, is the same whose voice then shook the earth. This the words directly express.

(3.) If any should say, that he who speaks to us from heaven, is not the same with him who spake on earth, whose voice then shook the earth; yet they must allow him to be a Being either equal or superior; though he that speaks to us from heaven, in his so speaking is mentioned as much the most to be regarded.

(4.) It is manifest, that by him that speaketh to us from heaven, the apostle means Christ the Mediator of the new covenant. This appears two ways: first, by the connection of the 25th with the 24th verse; in the former of which, he speaks of Christ as of him that speaketh good things to us by his blood, and then immediately bids us beware that we do not refuse him that speaketh; and, 2dly, It is plain that he that speaks the gospel to us from heaven, whose voice is so much more to be regarded than the voice of the law at Mount Sinai, is Christ, by that parallel place in the same epistle, chap. ii. 2, 3. "For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken to us by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by them that heard him?"

9. There must be a vast difference, not only in the degree, but in the kind, of respect and worship due to the Supreme God as well as in other things; since there is so infinite a difference between this Being and all others. There is a great difference as to the kind of respect proper for a wife to render to her husband,

and that which it is proper for her to render towards other men. So it is with regard to the respect due to God; otherwise there would not be a foundation for that jealousy, which God exercises on occasion of his peoples worshipping other beings.

In addition to what has been observed of the *works* and *worship* of God, the following sayings of Christ are worthy to be observed. John v. 17. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." Ver. 19. "What things soever the Father doth, these also doth the Son likewise." Ver. 23. "That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father:" together with what has been said of God's jealousies, arguing, that it is not only a different degree of respect, but also a different kind of respect that is due to the Supreme God from what is due to any creature. It is plain, God is jealous in that respect, that no other being may share with him in honour, that he alone may be exalted. It is expected that other beings should humble themselves, should be brought low, should deny themselves for God, and esteem themselves as nothing before him. And as he requires that they should abase themselves, he would not set up others to exalt them to a rivalry with himself. Jealousy excites a desire that others should be contemned in comparison with ourselves.

If men may pray to Christ, may adore him, give themselves up to him, trust in him, praise him, and serve him; what kind of worship is due to the Father, entirely distinct from all this in nature and kind?

When Satan tempted Christ to fall down and worship him, as one that had power to dispose of the kingdoms of this world, and the glory of them; Christ replies, "It is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." But the Arians must suppose, that we are required to worship and serve some other being than this Lord God which Christ speaks of, as the disposer not only
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of the kingdoms of this world, but of the kingdom of heaven and the glory thereof.

On the supposition of Christ's being a creature, he would much more properly be ranked with creatures than with God, (as he so generally is, being called by his names and titles, having ascribed to him his attributes, dominions, &c.). However great a creature he is, he is infinitely nearer to the rest of the creatures than to God.

10. Concerning the grand *objection* from that text, "Of that day and hour knoweth no man, nor the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father:" I would observe, that even the Arians themselves, with regard to some things said of Christ, must make the distinction between his power or knowledge, as to his inferior and his superior nature; or, if they do not allow two natures, then, at least, as to his humbled state, and his state both before and after his humiliation: As Mark vii. 24. "And would have no man know it, but he *could not* be hid." This cannot mean that the person who created the whole world, visible and invisible, &c. and by whom all things consist and are governed, had not power to order things so, that he might be hid.

11. Concerning the *attribute of eternity*. This is ascribed to God, as a thing peculiarly distinguishing the Only true God. Gen. xxi. 33. "And Abraham planted a grove, and called on the name of *Jehovah*, the everlasting God." Psal. xc. 2. "From everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." Isa. lxiii. 16. "Thy name is from everlasting." 1 Tim. vi. 16. "Who only hath immortality."

Of Christ it is said, "Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth, &c. Thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail."

"Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Psal. viii. 23. "I was set up from everlasting." Heb. vii. 3. "Without beginning of days, or

end of life." Mic. v. 2. " Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." Isa. ix. 6. " The mighty God, the everlasting Father."

12. It is observable, that Christ is also frequently called God absolutely, *Deus* and *Deus*; by which name even the heathens themselves always understood the Supreme God.

Dr Cudworth, in his Intellectual System, abundantly shews, that the heathens generally worshipped but one supreme, eternal, universal, uncreated, Deity; but that their best philosophers maintained, that this deity subsisted in three hypostases: though they had many created gods. And in page 627, he says, " It now appears, from what we have declared, that " as to the ancient and genuine Platonists and Pythagoreans, none of their trinity of Gods, or divine hypostases, were independent, so, neither were they creature gods, but uncreated, they being all of them not only eternal, and necessarily existent and immutable, but also universal, *i. e.* infinite and omnipotent causes, principles, and creators of the whole world. From whence it follows, that these Platonists could not justly be taxed with idolatry, in giving religious worship to each hypostasis of their trinity. And one grand design of Christianity being to abolish the Pagan idolatry or creature worship, it cannot justly be charged therewith, from that religious worship given to our Saviour Christ and the Holy Ghost, they being none of them, according to the true and orthodox Christianity, creatures, however the Arian hypothesis made them such. And this was indeed the grand reason why the ancient fathers so zealously opposed Arianism. We shall cite a remarkable passage out of Athanasius, fourth oration against the Arians, to this purpose, as follows:

" Why, therefore, do not these Arians, holding this, reckon themselves amongst the Pagans or Gentiles, since they do, in like manner, worship
" the

“ the creature, besides the Creator? *τη κτίει λατρεύουσιν*
 “ *παρὰ τὸν κτίσαντα.*” Athanasius’s meaning here, could
 not well be, that they worshipped the creature *more*
 than the Creator; forasmuch as the Arians constantly
 declared that they gave less worship to the Son than
 to the Father.

“ For though the Pagans worship one uncreated, and
 “ many created gods; but these Arians only one un-
 “ created, and one created, to wit, the Son, or Word
 “ of God; yet will not this make any real difference
 “ betwixt them; because the Arians’ one created god,
 “ is one of those many Pagan gods; and these many
 “ gods of the Pagans or Gentiles have the same na-
 “ ture with this one, they being alike creatures.”

It is remarkable, that in so many places, both in
 the Old Testament and New; when Christ is spoken
 of, his glory and prerogatives represented, and the re-
 spect due to him urged, that the vanity of idols in the
 same places should be represented, and idolatry warn-
 ed against. See Psal. xvi. 4. It is manifest, that it
 is the Messiah that there speaks. See also many pro-
 phecies of Isaiah and other prophets, 1 John v.
 20, 21.; 1 Cor. x. 19,—22.

“ There is not the least intimation, where Christ is
 “ styled *God*, either in the texts themselves, or con-
 “ texts, that this is to be understood of his office, and
 “ not of his person; as is the case where magistrates
 “ are styled Gods, where the very next words ex-
 “ plain it, and tell us what is to be understood by it.
 “ And when Moses and angels are called Gods, no
 “ one, who attends to the whole discourse, could ea-
 “ sily mistake the meaning, and not see that this
 “ term *God* was there used in an inferior and meta-
 “ phorical sense.” Letter to the Dedicator of Mr
 Emlyn’s Inquiry, &c. p. 7, 8. Mat. xix. 17. “ Why
 callest thou me good? there is none good but one,
 that is God.” “ Mr Emlyn affirms it to be evident,
 “ that Christ here distinguishes himself from God,
 “ and denies of himself what he affirms of God.
 “ But the truth of his interpretation entirely depends
 “ upon

" upon the opinion which the young man had of
 " Christ, who received this answer from him." Ibid.
 p. 17, 18.

Mark xiii. 32. " Of that day knows no man,—nor
 the Son, but the Father:" *i. e.* he did not know it,
 considered as man, and as the " Prophet and Teach-
 " er of mankind. The disciples inquire of him as
 " their Prophet and Teacher. He tells them he did
 " not know, but the Father. The general term Fa-
 " ther here comprehends the whole Godhead." Ibid.
 p. 22, 27, 30.

" Your author inquires in what words Jesus
 " Christ could have denied himself to be God more
 " plain," &c. " The question may be returned at
 " least with equal force,—In what words could he, or
 " his apostles, have affirmed him to be truly God, more
 " plain and full? And that which your author op-
 " poses, has vastly the advantage, not only for rea-
 " sons already mentioned, but as having the whole
 " current of Scripture in its favour. And further,
 " what I look upon in favour of the interpretation I
 " am pleading for, is, that it is founded upon ex-
 " pressions which either Christ himself uttered when
 " professedly and designedly discoursing of himself,
 " or were uttered by his apostles, when designedly
 " speaking of him, and describing him to mankind.
 " Whereas this text, (Mark xiii. 32.), which your
 " author lays the greatest stress upon, and, indeed,
 " many of the others, may be termed accidental."
 Ibid. p. 34.

John 16. 30. " Now, we are sure that thou know-
 est all things," &c. " The following places are ob-
 " jected to our interpretation of this passage, as pa-
 " rallel: 2 Sam. xiv. 20. The woman of Tekoah to
 " David, declaring that he was wise as an angel of
 " God to know all things on earth; and that in
 " 1 John ii. 20. " Ye know all things;" which he
 " expressly limits to matters or truths, concerning
 " which he was writing.

" But

" But I challenge a single instance in Scripture,
 " where an expression of the like nature was uttered
 " with that air of assurance ; or where the expres-
 " sion itself, or what immediately precedes or fol-
 " lows, does not plainly confine it to certain bounds,
 " or shew that it is to be understood in a limited
 " sense." Ibid. p. 40, 41, 42.

" If our Saviour had not infinite divine omnisci-
 " ence, when St Peter said, Lord, Thou knowest
 " all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee ; he
 " must have argued very foolishly, to have inferred,
 " that Christ knew his heart, or his love to him,
 " merely because he knew many things !" Ibid.
 p. 43.

That Christ had divine omniscience, appears from
 his own words ; Rev. ii. 23. " And all the churches
 shall know that I am HE which searcheth the hearts
 and the reins." Now Solomon declares, 1 Kings
 viii. 39. " Thou, even Thou only, knowest the hearts
 of all the children of men." And Jer. xvii. 10.
 God says, " I, the Lord, search the heart ; I try the
 reins." And Christ does not say, The churches shall
 know that I search the reins and the heart ; but that
 " I am HE," &c. : which, if words have any force in
 them, yea, if the expression is not altogether unin-
 telligible, implies, " I am He who is distinguished by
 this character ; or the churches shall know that I am
 the God who searcheth," &c. Ibid. p. 43, 44.

" I add, that the expression, I AM HE, as it is
 " here spoken of Christ, seems to be peculiarly ap-
 " propriated to the Supreme God in Scripture.
 " Thus, Is. xli. 4. " I the Lord, the First and the
 " Last, I AM HE ;" chap. xlv. 4. " I AM HE ;" and
 " li. 12. " I, even I AM HE, that comforteth you."
 " The Great God here distinguishes himself from
 " all others, by saying, " I AM HE." This evident-
 " ly denotes His great power, might, and suprem-
 " acy ; and this expression, if I mistake not, is no-
 " where in the Scripture, used in the same manner
 " by any, but God himself."

" But

" But what confirms it, that our Saviour intends
 " here to represent himself as the Supreme Omni-
 " scient God, is his expressly claiming another di-
 " stinguishing character of God Almighty in the
 " preceding chapter, ver. 8. and 11. See Is. xliv.
 " 6. " Thus saith the Lord, the King of Israel, and
 " his Redeemer, the Lord of Hosts; I am the First,
 " and I am the Last:" also chap. xli. 4. and xlviii.
 " 12. And in the same manner our Saviour distin-
 " guishes and characterises himself." Ibid. p. 50,
 51. That the eternal Logos should be subordinate
 to the Father, though not inferior in nature; yea,
 that Christ, in his office, should be subject to the Fa-
 ther, and less than He, though in his higher nature
 not inferior, is not strange. It is proper, among man-
 kind, that a son should be subordinate to his father, yea,
 subject in many respects, though of the same human
 nature; yea, though in no respect inferior in any
 natural qualification. It was proper that Solomon
 should be under David his father, and be appointed
 king by him, and receive charges and directions from
 him, though, even then, in his youth, probably not
 inferior to his father.

The disciples of Christ, or those that trusted in
 him, when here on earth, applied to him as trusting
 in his ability, not only to heal all diseases of body,
 and to raise the dead; but as leaving their souls in
 his hands, and being able to heal the diseases of their
 minds; as being the Author and Fountain of virtue.
 So Luke xvii. 5. " The apostles said unto the Lord,
 Increase our faith." So the father of the demoniac,
 Mark ix. 24. " Lord, I believe, help Thou mine un-
 belief."

How can Christ be said to be an express image of
 the Father, if he is, in many respects, infinitely
 different from God? May we not reasonably be-
 lieve, that, inasmuch as he is said to be his son
 and image, he is so in the same respect that the
 son whom Adam begat in his own image, was
 his

his son and image ; that is, one proceeding from him of the same kind with himself ?

It is a good argument for Christ's divinity, that he is to be the Author of the resurrection. The atoms and particles in one little finger, are capable of so many removes, and such dispersions, that I believe it would surpass any finite understanding, at two or three thousand years end, to tell what distinct particles of the universe belonged to it. It would require a vast strength and subtlety of mind, to trace but one atom so nicely, as to know that individual atom in the universe, after so long a time ; after it had been a particle of air, water, oil, or animal spirit, &c. and had been transported with prodigious swiftness from place to place, backwards and forwards, millions of times in a minute amongst innumerable others of the same kind. Especially, would it be exceeding difficult, so narrowly to watch two of such at once. If so, what would it be, to follow every atom in a man's body ; yea, of all the bodies that ever have died, or shall die ? And, at the same time, to have the mind exercised with full vigour upon innumerable other matters, that require an equal strength of understanding ? and all this with such ease, that it shall be no labour to the mind ?

God would not have given us any person to be our Redeemer, unless he was of divine and absolutely Supreme dignity and excellency, or was the Supreme God ; lest we should be under temptation to pay him too great respect ; lest, if he were not the Supreme God, we should be under temptation to pay him that respect which is due only to the Supreme, and which God, who is a jealous God, will by no means allow to be paid to an inferior being. Men are very liable to be tempted to rate those too highly, from whom they have received great benefits. They are prone to give them that respect and honour, that belongs to God only. Thus, the Gentile world deified and adored such of their kings as did great things for them, and others from whom they received great benefits.

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 " scient God, is his expressly claiming another di-
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nefits. So Cornelius was tempted to give too great respect to Peter, he being the person that God had marked out to be his teacher and guide in things pertaining to eternal salvation. So the apostle John could scarce avoid adoring the angel that shewed him those visions: he fell down to worship him once and again. Though the first time he had been strictly warned against it; yet the temptation was so great, that he did it again: Rev. xix. 10.; xxii. 8. This being a temptation they were so liable to, was greatly disallowed of by God. When Cornelius fell down before Peter, he took him up, saying, "Stand up; I myself also am a man." So, when the people at Lystra were about to offer divine worship to Paul and Barnabas, when they heard of it, they rent their clothes, and ran in among them, crying out, "Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you, that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and the earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein;" Acts xiv. And when John was about to adore the angel, how strictly was he warned against it? "See thou do it not," says he, "for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, that have the testimony of Jesus Christ: worship God." And God has always been so careful to guard against it, that he hid the body of Moses, that it might be no temptation to idolatry. But if any thing can be a temptation to give supreme respect and honour to one that is not the supreme being, this would be a temptation, viz. to have a person that is not the supreme being, to be our redeemer; to have such an one endure such great sufferings out of love to us, and thereby to deliver us from such extreme and eternal misery, and to purchase for us so great and eternal happiness. God therefore, in wisdom, has appointed such a Person to be our Redeemer, that is of absolutely supreme glory and excellency, that we may be in no danger of loving and adoring him too much; that we may prize him, ex-
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alt him for the great things that he has done for us, as much as we will, nay so far as his love to us, his sufferings for us, and the benefits we receive by him, can tempt us to, without danger of exceeding. Christ has done as great things for us as ever the Father did. His mercy and love, have been as great and wonderful; and we receive as much benefit by them, as we do by the love and mercy of the Father. The Father never did greater things for us than to redeem us from hell, and bring us to eternal life. But if Christ had not been a Person equal with the Father, and worthy of our equal respect, God would not have so ordered it, that the temptation to love and respect the Son, which results from favours that we have by kindness received, should be equal with the inducements we have to love and respect the Father.

Reasons against DR WATTS's Notion of the Pre-existence of Christ's Human Soul.

1. God's manner with all creatures, is, to appoint them a trial, before he admits them to glory and confirmed happiness. Especially may this be expected, before such honour and glory as the creating of the world, and other things which Dr Watts ascribes to Christ's human soul.

2. If the pre-existing soul of Christ created the world, then, doubtless, he upholds and governs it. The same Son of God that did one, does the other. He created all things, and by Him all things consist. And if so, how was his dominion confined to the Jewish nation, before his incarnation, but extends to all nations since? Besides, there are many things ascribed in the Old Testament to the Son of God, in those very places, which Dr Watts himself supposes to speak of Him, that imply his government of the whole world, and all nations. The same person that

is spoken of as King of Israel, is represented as the Governor of the world.

3. According to this scheme, the greatest of the works of the Son in his created nature, implying the greatest exaltation, was His first work of all; viz. His creating all things, all worlds, all things visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: and this before ever he had any trial at all of his obedience, &c. At least, this work seems much greater than judging the world at the Last Day; which the Scripture often speaks of as one of the highest parts of his exaltation, which he has in reward for his obedience and sufferings: And Dr. Watts himself supposes his honours, since his humiliation, to be much greater than before.

4. The Scripture represents the visible dominion of Christ over the world as a complex Person; or his sitting at the right hand of God the Father, and governing the world as the Father's vicegerent, as a new thing, after his ascension. But, by Dr. Watts's scheme, it cannot be so.

5. Satan, or Lucifer, before his fall, was the Morning Star, the Covering Cherub, the highest and brightest of all creatures.

6. On this scheme, it will follow, that the covenant of redemption was made with a person that was not *sui juris*, and not at liberty to act his own mere good pleasure, with respect to undertaking to die for sinners; but was obliged to comply, on the first intimation that it would be well-pleasing to God, and a thing that he chose.

7. According to that scheme, the man Christ Jesus was not properly the son of the virgin, and so the son of man. To be the son of a woman, is to receive being in both soul and body, in consequence of

a conception in her womb. The soul is the principal part of the man; and sonship implies derivation of the soul as well as the body, by conception. Not that the soul is a part of the mother, as the body is. Though the soul is no part of the mother, and be immediately given by God, yet that hinders not its being derived by conception; it being consequent on it, according to a law of nature. It is agreeable to a law of nature, that where a perfect human body is conceived in the womb of a woman, and properly nourished and increased, a human soul should come into being: and conception may as properly be the cause whence it is derived, as many other natural effects are derived from natural causes or antecedents. For it is the power of God which produces these effects, though it be according to an established law. The soul being so much the principal part of man, a derivation of the soul by conception, is the chief thing implied in a man's being the son of a woman.

8. According to what seems to be Dr Watts's scheme, the Son of God is no distinct divine Person from the Father. So far as He is a divine Person, He is the same Person with the Father. So that, in the covenant of redemption, the Father covenants with himself, and He takes satisfaction of himself, &c. Unless you will say, that one nature covenanted with the other; the two natures in the same person covenanted together, and one nature in the same person, took satisfaction of the other nature in the same person. But how does this confound our minds, instead of helping our ideas, or making them more easy and intelligible!

9. The Son of God, as a distinct Person, was from eternity. It is said, Mic. v. 2. "His goings forth were of old, from everlasting." So Prov. viii. 23. "I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." So he is called, Is. ix. 6. "The everlasting Father." I know of no ex-

pressions used in Scripture, more strong, to signify the eternity of the Father himself.

10. Dr Watts supposes the world to be made by the preexistent soul of Christ; and thinks it may properly be so said, though the knowledge and power of this preexistent soul could not extend to the most minute parts, every atom, &c.—But it is evidently the design of the Scripture to assure us, that Christ made all things whatever in the absolute universality. John i. 3. “All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.” Col. i. 16, 17. “For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him, and for Him: and He is before all things, and and by Him all things consist.” Now, if we suppose matter to be infinitely divisible, it will follow, that let His wisdom and power be as great as they will, if finite, but a few of those individual things that are made, were the effects of his power and wisdom: yea, that the number of the things that were made by Him, are so few, that they bear no proportion to others, that did not immediately fall under His notice; or that of the things that are made, there are ten thousand times, yea infinitely more, not made by Him, than are made by Him:—And so, but infinitely few of their circumstances are ordered by His wisdom.

11. It is said, Heb. ii. 8. “Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that He put all in subjection under Him, He left nothing that is not put under him.” Here it is represented, that God the Father has put every individual thing under the power and government of another person, distinct from Himself. But this cannot be true of the human soul of Christ, as it must be according to
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Dr Watts's scheme, let the powers of that be never so great, if they are not infinite. For things and circumstances, and dependencies and consequences of things in the world, are infinite in number; and therefore a finite understanding and power cannot extend to them: yea, it can extend to but an infinitely small part of the whole number of individuals, and their circumstances and consequences. Indeed, in order to the disposal of a few things, in their motions and successive changes, to a certain precise issue, there is need of infinite exactness, and so need of infinite power and wisdom.

12. The work of creation. And so the work of upholding all things in being, can, in no sense, be properly said to be the work of any created nature. If the created nature gives forth the word, as Joshua did, when he said, "Sun, stand thou still;" yet it is not that created nature that does it: That being that depends himself on creating power, does not properly do any thing towards creation, as Joshua did nothing towards stopping the sun in his course. So that it cannot be true in Dr Watts's scheme, that that Son of God, who is a distinct Person from God the Father, did at all, in any manner of propriety, create the world, nor does he uphold it or govern it. Nor can those things that Christ often says of himself, be true: as, "The Father worketh hitherto, and I work."—"Whatsoever the Father doth, those doth the Son likewise," John v. 17, 19.; it being very evident, that the works of creating and upholding and governing the world are ascribed to the Son, as a distinct Person from the Father.

13. It is one benefit or privilege of the Person of Christ, when spoken of as distinct from the Father, to have the Spirit of God under him, to be at his disposal, and to be his Messenger; which is infinitely too much for any creature: John xv. 26.; xvi. 7, 13, 14.; and Acts ii. 33.

14. Not only is the word *Elohim* in the plural number, but it is joined to a verb of the plural number, in Gen. xx. 13. *When God caused me to wander from my Father's house.* The word *Hithgnu*, *caused to wander*, is in the plural number. This is agreeable to the use of plural verbs, adjectives and pronouns, in Gen. i. 26.; iii. 22.; xi. 7. See other instances in Gen. xxxv. 7.; Exodus xxxii. 4., compared with Neh. ix. 18; Isaiah xvi. 6.

The very frequent joining of the word *Elohim*, a word in the plural number, with the word *Jehovah*, a word in the singular number, (as may be seen in places referred to in the English concordance, under the words, Lord God, Lord his God, Lord my God, Lord our God, Lord their God, Lord thy God, Lord your God), seems to be a significant indication of the union of several divine persons in one essence. The word *Jehovah* signifies as much as the word *Essence*, and is the proper name of God with regard to his self-existent, eternal, all-sufficient, perfect, and immutable Essence. Moses seems to have regard to something remarkable in thus calling *Elohim*, the plural, so often by the singular name, *Jehovah*; especially in that remark which he makes for the special observation of God's people Israel, in Deut. vi. 4. "Hear, O Israel, The Lord our God is one Lord." In the original, it is *Jehovah Elohenu Jehovah Ehadh*; the more proper translation of which is, *Jehovah our God is one Jehovah*. The verb *is* is understood, and properly inserted between *Jehovah Elohenu* and *Jehovah Ehadh*, thus, *Jehovah Elohenu is Jehovah Ehadh*; which, if most literally translated, is thus, *Jehovah Our divine Persons is one Jehovah*: as though Moses, in this remark; had a particular reference to the word *Elohim* being in the plural number, and would guard the people against imagining from thence that there was a plurality of Essences or Beings, among whom they were to divide their affections and respect.

A farther confirmation, that the name *Elohim*, when used as the name of the True God, signifies some plurality, is, that this same name is commonly, all over the Hebrew bible, used to signify the gods of the Heathens, when many gods are spoken of. See those places in the Hebrew bible, which are referred to in the English concordance, under the word *Gods*.

In Exodus xx. 2, 3. when it is said in the third verse, "Thou shalt have no other Gods before Me." The word is the same as in the foregoing verse, where it is said, "I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt." It is *Elohim* in both verses: I am the Jehovah, thy *Elohim*: Thou shalt have no other *Elohim*. Yet the latter *Elohim* is joined with an adjective of the plural number; which seems naturally to lead the children of Israel, to whom God spake these words, to suppose a plurality in the *Elohim* which brought them out of Egypt, implied in the name *Jehovah*. Ps. lviii. 11. "Verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth; *Elohim Shophetim*:" Which literally is, *Elohim*, judges, (in the plural number). See the evident distinction made between Jehovah *sending*, and Jehovah *sent* to the people, and dwelling in the midst of them, in Zech. ii. 8, 9, 10, 11.; and iv. 8, 9, 11. "For thus saith the Lord of Hosts, After the glory hath He *sent* me unto the nations which spoiled you: for he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of His eye."

"For behold, I will shake mine hand upon them, and they shall be a spoil to their servants: and ye shall know that the Lord of Hosts hath *sent* me."

"Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord."

"And many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and shall be my people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the Lord of Hosts hath *sent* me unto thee."

"Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation
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tion of this house ; his hands shall also finish it ; and thou shalt know that the Lord of Hosts hath *sent* me unto you."

" Then answered I, and said unto him, What are these two olive trees upon the right side of the candlestick, and upon the left side thereof ?"

Joshua xxiv. 19. " And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve Jehovah ; for he is an Holy God, Elohim Kedhoshim." *He is the Holy Gods.* Not only is the word *Elohim* properly plural, the very same that is used, ver. 15. the Gods which your fathers served, &c.—but the adjective *Holy* is plural. A plural substantive and adjective are used here concerning the True God, just in the same manner as in 1 Sam. 4, 8. " Who shall deliver us out of the hands of these mighty Gods." And in Dan. iv. 8. " In whom is the Spirit of the Holy Gods." So ver. 9, 18. and chap. v. 11. that the plural number should thus be used with the epithet *Holy*, agrees well with the doxology of the angels, " Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts," &c.—Isaiah vi. and Rev. iv.

It is an argument, that the Jews of old understood that there were several persons in the Godhead, and particularly, that when the cherubim, in the 6th of Isaiah, cried, " Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord of Hosts," they had respect to three persons : That the Seventy interpreters, in several places, where the Holy One of Israel is spoken of, use the plural number ; as in Isaiah xli. 16. " Thou shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel ;" in the LXX, it is, *εὐφρανθήσῃ ἐν τοῖς ἁγίοις Ἰσραὴλ.* Isaiah lx. 14. " The Zion of the Holy One of Israel ;" it is *σίων ἁγίων Ἰσραὴλ.* So Jer. li. 5. " Filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel ;" *ἀπὸ τῶν ἁγίων Ἰσραὴλ.*

28 SE60
THE END.

ERRATUM.

Page 16. near the middle, for *obtained*, read *retained*.

21